METRO-GOLDWYN-MAYER

WAR GAMES 2000

by

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FADE IN:

Titles and Credits Begin Over:

Nightmarish close-ups of squirming snakes floating weightlessly... gecko lizards treading slowly in midair... orange salamanders levitating and tumbling... a swarm of tarantulas somersaulting, their legs dancing in slow motion.

A white light appears behind this surreal menagerie. It's the moon, visible through a thick window. And suddenly we see a suited ASTRONAUT looming into view.

EXT. 200 MILES ABOVE THE EARTH - NIGHT

Two space-walking astronauts transmit coordinates to the pilot of an ATLANTIS space shuttle. Slowly, the pristine shuttle docks with an old battered Soviet SALYUT-8 research station.

INT. THE SALYUT-8 - LATER - NIGHT

An airlock opens and three American astronauts maneuver into the darkness of the decrepit space station. Using headlamps, they check the SALYUT core module.

ASTRONAUT (INTO RADIO)
We are aboard Salyut-8 -- and she is not a pretty sight.

The SALYUT is awash in dangling panels, cables floating like seaweed, and drifting human refuse. As the astronauts glide through empty cabins, one checks his arm-pack computer.

ASTRONAUT II (INTO RADIO)
Hold on -- I'm getting an oxygen psi.

INT. SPL MISSION CONTROL - AT THAT MOMENT

Technicians pore over a vast array of monitors, and scientists decipher the tsunami of data being sent down from Atlantis.

MISSION CONTROL
(into p.a. system)
Some weirdness here people. After all these years, oxygen's still at supportable levels.

A legend comes on the screen:

SPACE PROPULSION LABORATORY
WALNUT CREEK, CALIFORNIA

MISSION CONTROL (CONT'D)
(radioing the crew)
Okay, Jack, you may opt to proceed without a/c.

INT. THE SALYUT-8 - MOMENTS LATER

Having shed his helmet, an astronaut pans a light over the dark sleeping compartment -- then notices a glow coming from the Spetr module -- **and a moving shadow**. Or was it?

INT. SPL MISSION CONTROL

The ground crew continues to monitor the reports from Atlantis --

ASTRONAUT II (OVER RADIO)
"We've also got minimal electrical functioning."

Scientist JESSIE MAYFIELD (30, ambitious, driven techno-wonk, attractive despite herself) maintains her usual controlled demeanor as she paces behind technicians at monitors.

JESSIE
Last person out must've forgotten to turn off the lights.

WALTER POWELL, SPL Director of Mission, nods humorlessly.

INT. SALYUT-8 - THE LABORATORY MODULE - NIGHT

Encountering the eerie flotsam of reptiles and spiders, the third astronaut radios in --

FEMALE ASTRONAUT
Call the exterminator -- left-over Russian lab experiments been busy multiplying up here...

She drifts past fluorescent lights, under which strange plants have outgrown their containers and now coil like jungle vines throughout the bio-tech module.

INT. SPL GROUND CONTROL - AT THAT MOMENT

Technicians grin as they listen to the space chatter --

ASTRONAUT (OVER RADIO)
"Place is majorly trashed. I'd say the Soviets definitely forfeited their security deposit."

Two Russian scientists, VIKTOR HERZEN (35, pony-tailed and intense) and DMITRY GUDIN (thickset, intimidating), comment in Russian, clearly not as amused as their American counterparts.

INT. AN SPL BROADCAST BOOTH - DAY

Up in the glassed-in balcony above mission control, a CNN REPORTER faces video-lights and updates the mission --

CNN REPORTER
(on the air)
The U.S. astronauts have boarded the abandoned Soviet space station. And Marina Burova, wife of Leonid Burova, the controversial Russian President, has just arrived here at SPL.

INT. SPL GROUND CONTROL

MARINA BUROVA (40, the stylish, subversively charming, power behind her husband's throne) shakes hands as Walter Powell introduces his mission supervisors, including Jessie Mayfield.

CNN REPORTER (CONT'D V.O.)
"Mrs Burova reiterated the Russians concern that a space station as large as their 12-year-old Salyut-8 could cause death or destruction when it fell back to earth."

INT. AN SPL BROADCAST BOOTH

The CNN REPORTER finishes her update --

CNN REPORTER
Admitting they lack the technical expertise themselves, the Russians have financed this U.S. mission to destroy the old space station. But observers also see Mrs Burova's appearance here as an attempt to ease strained relations between the U.S. and her husband's government.

INT. THE SALYUT-8 - LATER

An astronaut floats alone through the transfer node, his light throwing shadows -- until he stops himself. Ahead, he sees a large shape moving -- then it disappears. He looks frightened.

Cautiously he enters the Kristall module -- suddenly a figure lurches into him. The astronaut cries out -- but it's only an empty Russian spacesuit floating past.

ASTRONAUT II (OVER RADIO)
"What was that? Chris?"

ASTRONAUT (INTO RADIO)
Nothing. It was just -- nothing.

Floating, the astronaut bumps into a bank of lights which flicker on -- illuminating trays of sickly mushrooms and sprouts -- also illuminating **a monstrous-looking figure** that attacks him!

INT. THE CORE MODULE

The other two astronauts hear their partner screaming.

INT. SPL MISSION CONTROL - AT THAT MOMENT

His screams echo over the speakers, then there are shouts from the other astronauts --

ASTRONAUTS (OVER SPEAKERS)
"Where are you Chris? You all right?"

MISSION CONTROL
This is ground control. Give us a SitRep, please. Talk to us, commander!

INT. THE SALYUT-8

Struggling through the transfer node, the two astronauts see their panicked partner careening toward them --

ASTRONAUT
Something -- in there -- Jesus Christ!

They see the blood on his face and look shocked.

INT. THE DARK ASTROPHYSICS BAY

The astronauts enter cautiously and pan their lights.

FEMALE ASTRONAUT (INTO RADIO)
We're in the Kvant bay. I don't see anything. I don't know what --

Suddenly the astronauts hear a hideous scream. Their lights converge upward on a grotesque figure diving down at them --

Dressed in rags, the man's pale face is covered with scraggly hair, his eyes are bloodshot, and he's screaming in Russian as he attacks with a lethal combat bayonet.

He slashes one astronaut -- and globules of blood float out weightlessly. Swimming like a shark, the crazed man corners the second astronaut and lunges with his knife extended --

Suddenly the female astronaut executes a gymnast's spring off a wall, somersaults and kicks the attacker in the face, sending him spinning.

INT. SPL MISSION CONTROL - AT THAT MOMENT

The room in electrified as they hear the amplified battle on board the SALYUT.

TECHNICIAN
Jesus, there's somebody up there.

VIKTOR
He's a cosmonaut --

They hear the attacker shouting in Russian, and Walter Powell turns to Viktor Herzen and Dmitry Gudin --

POWELL
What's he saying?

VIKTOR
Nothing makes sense -- he's crazy!

Knowing Russian, Jessie translates --

JESSIE
He's saying that SALYUT'S been boarded
and he's under attack.

INT. THE SALYUT-8 - AT THAT MOMENT

The cosmonaut battles on, until an astronaut wrenches the knife from him. Then the cosmonaut claws desperately toward the station's command center -- **as if obeying old orders**.

He kicks loose, sails to the console and starts punching buttons on the small command module -- **initiating mysterious commands**. As the astronauts close in on him, the maniacal Russian retreats.

Then, shouting one last time in Russian, he rips open a circuit cover and slams his palm against a release switch --

A hatch BLASTS OPEN! The cosmonaut is sucked out into black space -- and **his body EXPLODES** -- vaporized into a sparkling bloody cloud that dissolves into the stars.

The American astronauts grab onto equipment and struggle to keep from being pulled out with him as the bay depressurizes.

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP: SPACE STATION AND STARS

The stars are invaded by a GIANT HAND reaching in to examine a model of a space station hanging by a piece of monofilament.

INT. UC BERKELEY AUDITORIUM - DAY

While a kid checks his space mock-up, we track past high school seniors standing by their projects, waiting to be judged in the annual ***"UC Berkeley Science Competition"***.

We see one girl has surreptitiously tuned her exhibit's monitor to a CNN report from SPL --

CNN REPORTER (ON TV)
" -- the Russian cosmonaut found alive aboard the SALYUT space station has reportedly been killed in an accident or a suicide -- we're getting conflicting reports here as to -- "

Meanwhile, on the stage at a podium, DAVID LIGHTMAN (32, scruffy teacher/author/scientific skeptic) is giving a welcoming speech --

DAVID
Even though I spend a lot of time teaching on this campus, being invited to speak here today is still pretty cool -- because I won this contest myself when I was in high school -- like you. I still remember riding over here on my bike that day, all excited. Unfortunately I rode over here on the same bike today -- which shows the amazing things winning the Berkeley Science Award can do for your career.
(audience laughter)
Actually, this contest used to be a funky affair. Now you've got all this publicity and these big corporate sponsors sitting behind me -- worrying that their BMWs are getting ripped off outside.
(more laughter)
These same high-tech moguls will someday soon be tempting you with briefcases full of money -- to figure out new ways to clone the Budweiser Frogs, or to invent One-Day Disposable Breasts.

The kids crack up. The corporate types on stage force smiles, and the CHANCELLOR looks worried.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Or hey, maybe they'll put you to work blowing up space stations -- as they are in the process of doing right now.
(warming to the subject)
Can you believe that they're going to explode that old SALYUT without having a clue what it'll do to space, what'll it do our environment? I mean hello -- there's plutonium on board that old Russian junker. When will these idiots wake up and -- ?

David notices the UC CHANCELLOR moving toward the podium --

DAVID (CONT'D)
Damn. I said to myself, don't stray from your notes, Dave, or you'll get into trouble. Sure enough...

The kids laugh. The Chancellor starts to applaud, hoping to get rid of David. He leans into the two mikes on the podium --

CHANCELLOR
Thank you Dr. Lightman. Provocative as usual.

DAVID
Actually I wasn't done.

David pulls one mike toward him. The Chancellor pulls it back -- and doesn't notice David fiddling below with the amplifier.

CHANCELLOR
Our final speaker is the President of NorCal Industries --

Suddenly the p.a. system HOWLS WITH SCREECHING FEEDBACK. When the Chancellor tries to adjust the mike, he's ZAPPED by a short-circuit, yelps and shakes his hand in pain.

DAVID
You better have that looked at. I'll just finish up here, sir.

David walks downstage and speaks unplugged to the young audience --

DAVID (CONT'D)
Seriously, I'm excited about seeing your experiments. I know how hard you've worked -- I remember that thrill and passion. But please don't forget two things: first, our inventions can do good or they can do evil, because we create them in our own image. And second: when they fail, as every machine must in time -- we better be able to survive without them.

The kids look thoughtful -- which is all David wanted.

INT. UC BERKELEY AUDITORIUM - LATER - DAY

The lights are up on a scientific circus: helium weather balloons floating overhead are buzzed by remote-controlled helicopters, while crab-like robots scoot across the floor.

David circulates with three other Judges, watching a girl wave a sonogram device over a pile of sand -- while a TV monitor reveals a skeleton beneath --

1ST CONTESTANT

-- using my "Ground-Penetrating Radar" an archaeologist could first examine the remains without digging and possibly ruining them --

ANOTHER EXPERIMENT

A kid lies on a table, moaning from a fake, bloody stomach wound that a young genius is painting with a special adhesive.

2ND CONTESTANT

Say I'm a surgeon and he's been shot -- well, I can forget those old-type surgical stitches -- and just apply the liquid polymer adhesive I invented to close the wound up and --

DAVID

Cool. "Sponge, suction, Crazy Glue."

ANOTHER EXPERIMENT

Only the eyes show of a guerrilla inventor KID wearing a full-face ski mask (to hide his identity). He stands in front of a table on which lays a single plastic card.

GUERILLA INVENTOR

I came up with a radical way to counterfeit BART cards -- so you can like screw the establishment and ride the subway for free.

The other judges shake their heads disapprovingly and move on -- David takes out his wallet and starts to buy one...

ANOTHER EXPERIMENT

A young techno-nerd named SAM flips a switch on his elaborate project, and an ionization beam shoots between the startled judges, hits a mirror and bounces toward the ceiling.

SAM

By using paired ultraviolet and visible-light laser beams, I've discovered how to divert lightning strikes -- to keep lightning from killing people or trashing their property.

David and the other judges are impressed -- until the vertical light beam starts pulsing and swinging in a circle like a drunken searchlight.

JUDGE

Should it be doing that...?

SAM
(definitely worried)
Uh -- not really -- something's
interfering --

Suddenly the beam sparks, a pulse of energy shoots down and a muffled explosion sends bystanders scooting. Sam sees his chances of winning go up in smoke as the judges depart.

SAM (CONT'D)
Wait, it works. I swear!

Only David remains, studying the smoking apparatus.

SAM (CONT'D)
They don't believe me. I feel like
Scully and Mulder... more like Mulder.

DAVID
On the up side, your machine did intercept something -- it just wasn't
lightning.

SAM
My so-called life is over...

DAVID
(examining a melted piece)
What the hell hit you -- ?

David notices the TV monitor nearby that's part of the girl's project. He sees a live CNN shot of the Russian space station.

CNN REPORTER (ON TV)
"After the bizarre discovery of the
cosmonaut stranded aboard SALYUT,
scientists here at SPL are working
against the clock to get the planned
demolition of the abandoned Russian
space station back on schedule -- "

Sam sees David looking from the TV to his "lightning diverter".

DAVID
Hold on... I'm into a flashback here.
Years ago the Russians were experimenting with something called laser
telemetry pulses.

SAM
Oh wow -- you mean maybe my diverter
got zapped from that space station? Oh
man, is that what you're thinking?

DAVID

No. I'm thinking I lost too much sleep and a decent-paying job over that damn space station. So today I'm just going to be the judge -- and your case is dismissed.

David walks off -- Sam follows him like a shadow.

SAM

But if it was some laser pulse thing -- that old Russian SALYUT's supposed to be totally dead. So you gotta tell somebody. This could be like majorly --

DAVID

Incorrecto, Samuel. The powers-that-be don't listen -- don't care -- and don't play by the rules.

SAM

But you told us not to always trust science -- to blow whistles and shout the truth. Or is that just like your standard speech?

DAVID

Does the expression "annoying pain in the butt" compute for you?

But as David eyes Sam, he seems to see himself fifteen years ago and softens.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Let me take a wild shot: your teachers hate you because you're smarter than they are -- the other kids think you've beamed down from an alien zip code -- you've never had a tan. But you can't help it, because that's -- that's who we both are, right, Sam?

Sam looks depressed. David notices the TV showing the Russian space station -- and he shakes his head morosely.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Okay, I'm gonna regret this. But if you insist on a sneak preview of the real world waiting for you...

David walks back to Sam's still smoking "lightning diverter".

SAM

What do you mean? What're you -- ?

DAVID
(poking around)
You think to install a tape log?

SAM
No way, that's cheap shit. I got a CBX digital chip to register activity.

The kid pulls out the chip and shows it to David.

DAVID
Excuse me, Doctor Demento. So why don't you grab your CBX chip and bring it with you.

SAM
Bring it? Where?

David walks off. Sam follows, looking excited.

DAVID
You lost the contest, but you will receive an all-expense paid visit to famous Space Propulsion Laboratories.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE PROPULSION LABORATORIES (SPL) - DAY

The glass-and-steel building stretches across the brown California hills. David's GM EV-1 electric car hums toward the entrance.

INT. SPL LOBBY - THE SECURITY DESK - DAY

A suspicious SECURITY GUARD scrutinizes David's I.D. card.

SECURITY GUARD
This pass expired three months ago.

A 2ND SECURITY GUARD hangs up a phone.

2ND SECURITY GUARD
Mr Powell's not available and his secretary says she doesn't have an appointment for you -- and never will.

David ignores the jab and studies the phony Bart subway card he bought from the masked kid at the science fair...

EXT. SPL SHIPPING AND RECEIVING AREA - DAY

David and Sam maneuver through a maze of delivery trucks.

SAM
I thought you said you worked here?

DAVID

For a couple nanoseconds -- as a technical adviser -- until they didn't want to hear my advice anymore.

Sam follows David down some steps to a deserted utility entrance. There David takes out his trusty Buck Multi-tool and starts shaving the sides off the plastic Bart card.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Let's hope that urban guerrilla didn't stiff me on this subway card.

David inserts the card into the steel door's Security lock -- but the card doesn't work. The door remains locked.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Damn. Maybe if I used -- I need a wire or --

David scans the ground, can't find anything -- then notices Sam's mouth.

SAM

What...?

DAVID

Give me that.

David yanks the retainer out of Sam's mouth and starts to bend the wire off it. Sam's shocked.

SAM

No, wait, you're gonna --

DAVID

Geez, you ever brush?

David re-inserts the subway card -- then, holding the retainer, he sticks the straightened wire into the security lock -- until a strange whining noise grows in intensity.

DAVID (CONT'D)

Oh shit, overheating --

David's fingers are burned and he waves them -- but the door finally springs open and they disappear inside.

DAVID (CONT'D)

I warned them their systems were vulnerable, but oh no, they said, we trust our machines...

INT. AN SPL HALLWAY

David heads down the busy hall. Sam tags along, staring grimly at his retainer -- which has melted like a string of Silly Putty.

SAM
My mom's going to kill me...

DAVID
Listen, did Einstein have straight teeth? Huh? Ask your mom that.

INT. SPL MISSION CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

David and Sam push through doors and enter the vast room. Sam is awed by the mythic sight of the NASA/SPL mission control.

SAM
Yow, high budget. This is where I'm going to work someday!

DAVID
Be careful what you wish for.

David and Sam maneuver past staffers and scientists who are still tense after the cosmonaut's death. David locates JACK, a neurasthenic SPL engineer hovering over a telemetrics console.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Hey, Jack, I've got something that --

JACK
Lightman? Who let you in?

SAM
He gronked the security lock using a subway --

DAVID
You got a mute button, Sam?
(to Jack)
Quick question -- are you scanning the EMACS frequencies?

JACK
No. Why?

DAVID
Run a transient scan for me, will you? Check for a laser pulse signal.

JACK
Now? Didn't you hear about the cosmonaut they found up there?

SAM
That was so twisted. Why did the dude disintegrate himself?

JACK
No clue. But everybody's crazed here and we've gone into hyper-shit. You'll have to talk to Mayfield for a special scan --

DAVID
Who's Mayfield?

JACK
She's you.

JESSIE (O.S.)
I'm who?

Jessie Mayfield appears to check the monitors.

JACK
David Lightman -- Jessie Mayfield.

David sizes up Jessie -- and vice versa. For these two, it's clearly a case of skepticism at first sight.

JESSIE
So you're Dr Lightman.

DAVID
And you took my job.

JESSIE
Well, they asked me to try to put the pieces back together. Listen, I have a little work to do if you'll --

DAVID
But are you doing it?

JESSIE
What?

Jessie's half-listening to David as she's handed new data by Viktor Herzen, one of the collaborating Russian scientists.

DAVID
Did you know that SALYUT is sending down laser pulse signals?

JESSIE
Wrong. SALYUT hasn't hiccupped in five years.

Viktor looks puzzled and turns on some telemetrics equipment.

SAM
No, you're the one who's wrong
(as Jessie glares)
My "Lightning Diverter" just got like
totally zapped by laser pulses.

JESSIE
Bummer, dude.
(eyeing David)
Who's the kid -- your staff?

DAVID
Sam, show her the CBX. We brought a
digital recording that logged the
signals that --

TECHNICIAN
(interrupting)
If we don't get a green light to blow
this sucker in ten minutes our window
of opportunity slams shut for good.

Now Jessie gets more bad news from Viktor Herzen --

VIKTOR (O.S.)
You'd better look at this -- it's
true what he says about the signals.

DAVID
Somebody with a brain got a job here?

JESSIE
Viktor's on loan from the Moscow
Academy of Science. Let me see that.

They all watch Viktor finish a search on a telemetrics scanner.

VIKTOR
We expected no signals from SALYUT,
so we don't look for this kind. But
there they are.

DAVID
Back in the eighties, wasn't your
military developing laser pulse
telemetry?

Dmitry Gudin, the other Russian scientist, shoots Viktor a look and intercedes --

DMITRY
That was just Soviet propaganda --
what you call scare tactics.

David studies the big Russian --

DAVID
Well, it's what you call scaring me.

Seeing Jessie walking off again, David and Sam follow her.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Hey -- Mayday --

SAM
It's Mayfield.

DAVID
The Russian verified it. You've got un-ID'ed signals pinballing. You're in charge of Safeguards -- you can stop the mission. Tell them they can't blow up the space station.

Jessie turns on David angrily --

JESSIE
Dr Lightman, first you reported this mission would damage the ozone layer, then you claimed we were going to release harmful plutonium, now it's laser pulses -- they must love you at 9-1-1.

David thinks unkind thoughts as he watches Jessie walk off.

INT. SUPERVISORS' PLATFORM

Jessie comes up the steps onto the control platform where SPL Mission Director Walter Powell is meeting with NASA officials.

POWELL
I've been told we have to go now --
(anxiously to Jessie)
Or never.

MARINA BUROVA
Mr Powell?

Marina Burova, the Russian President's wife, appears with her entourage. Her famous smile turns lethal as she corners Powell.

MARINA BUROVA (CONT'D)
I talked to my husband in Moscow. He assures you that we will investigate the cosmonaut's death -- but he also insists that this "accident" does not stop your mission.

POWELL
It's just that with these unexpected problems we might have to postpone --

MARINA BUROVA
No, Mr Powell. If _you_ stop now, _we_ will cancel the contract -- and also cancel the very large sum of money we are paying your company.

Powell gets the message. But more trouble lies ahead as he sees _David Lightman_ approaching.

POWELL
Christ -- Lightman, what do I need, a restraining order?

DAVID
Walter, don't blow it up. I don't think this was just Soviet science screwing up, I think there's something else going on in that space station that we don't --

MARINA BUROVA
(interrupting)
Excuse me. One moment. It is true Soviet science may have been misguided _politically_ in the past --

David finds himself face-to-face with the Russian First Lady.

MARINA BUROVA (CONT'D)
But the world also knows that it was _Russian scientists_ who put the first man into space.

DAVID
Did they remember to bring him back down that time?

Marina is not amused and walks away. Powell makes a phone call.

POWELL
That's enough, Lightman. You'll be escorted out of here now --

SAM
(adding his 2 cents)
I know why you're so scared of Dr. Lightman. Because he hasn't sold out like you have. All you care about is your One-Day Disposable Breasts!

Powell eyes Sam -- then turns to his staff.

POWELL
Do we have security guards anymore? Is this a holiday or something?
(MORE)

POWELL (CONT'D)
How the hell did these people get in
here?!
(glaring at David)
Now everybody listen carefully --
this mission is on. We are proceeding
as planned, and we are counting down
starting -- now.

Powell gives David a cold look and walks away.

DAVID
I've talked to smarter dolphins!

The Team Manager picks up a mike --

TEAM MANAGER (OVER SPEAKERS)
"This is your friendly TM, people --
this mission is on and the new countdown time is minus eight thirty four."

The team is re-energized. David looks at Jessie.

DAVID
I wouldn't approve this project, but
you're going to, right?

She sneers at him and goes off to do her job.

SECURITY HEAD (O.S.)
Dr Lightman?

The HEAD OF SPL SECURITY arrives with two guards.

SECURITY HEAD (CONT'D)
You want to come with us -- and let
these folks do their work?

INT. OUTSIDE A SUPERVISOR'S OFFICE - MINUTES LATER

Sam sits nervously in an outer office. He looks amazed as he watches David being frisked by security guards.

INT. THE SUPERVISOR'S OFFICE

David stares down at the activity on the floor of mission control -- while the Head of Security shows ED TRAXLER (45) David's file.

As Traxler leafs through it, he speaks in a surprisingly mild voice for a 6'5', 280 pound ex-Chicago Bear.

TRAXLER
Dr. Lightman, my name's Ed Traxler.
I'm the Security Officer on this
project. I'm with Defense Department
Intelligence.

DAVID
Is there such a thing?

TRAXLER
That comment cracked me up the first time I heard it. No, I'm no intellectual -- my "world view's" sort of like Monday Night Football. The beer tastes better when your team wins.
(reading David's file)
I see here you've had some other close encounters with the Department of Defense. When you were a punk graduate student you chained yourself to a submarine?

DAVID
The "Red Star" was a disabled Soviet sub -- carrying thermonuclear missiles -- and the US Navy was trying to sneak it into San Francisco bay.

TRAXLER
Let me guess who won -- and who got arrested.
(checking the file)
Then a couple years ago you got yourself on the six o'clock news when you created a phony melt-down at an atomic energy plant.

DAVID
They found out I was right -- the reactor was leaking and we got the plant closed.

TRAXLER
(reading the file)
And look at your other stats: numerous protests -- arrests -- all the way back to high school. Hell you must've been the original computer hacker. Until you made the mistake of hacking into the North American Air Defense system.

DAVID
And managed to prevent World War III -- that's a pretty impressive stat.

TRAXLER
Really? That part's not in here.

DAVID
Because they covered it up.

TRAXLER
Who knows. Even a paranoid can have enemies.

Now they hear the countdown over the mission control p.a. system.

DAVID
Christ, they're really going to do it.

TRAXLER
I guess you're not going to be a media hero today.

INT. SPECTATORS' BALCONY - MOMENTS LATER

As Traxler and the guards escort David and young Sam out of the building, they cross the spectators' balcony and hear the amplified countdown concluding --

MISSION CONTROL (OVER SPEAKERS)
" -- minus three -- two -- "

On the wall screens David watches small explosive charges going off on the SALYUT space station. Then there's a large final EXPLOSION -- and a bluish cloud blitzes TV reception.

When the screen clears they see the wreckage of the space station tumbling deeper into space. The SPL scientists and technicians cheer.

INT. SPL MISSION CONTROL - MOMENTS LATER

David, Sam and Traxler come down the steps onto the floor of Mission Control. A report comes over the speakers --

ASTRONAUT (OVER SPEAKERS)
"We have no indications of radiation or residual plutonium. We are nice and clean up here, Mission Control, and coming home."

David notices Jessie smiling and exchanging congratulations with other celebrating staffers. Then Traxler opens the door -- and watches David walk off down the hall with Sam.

DAVID
You study Latin, Sam?

SAM
Not in this life.

DAVID
Veni, vidi, vici. We came, we saw, we sucked gas.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE PROPULSION LABORATORIES - DAY

By a limousine, Russian BODYGUARDS talk with Dmitry Gudin, the Moscow scientist. Marina Burova comes out of SPL, accompanied by SERGEY SHERBO (35, Deputy Chief at the Russian embassy).

INT. THE LIMOUSINE

The bodyguards climb in. Marina gets in with Sherbo. As the limo drives off, Sherbo places a call and hands her the phone.

SHERBO
The President.

MARINA BUROVA
(on the phone)
It's done. The Americans blew up the space station.

INT. KREMLIN - OFFICE OF THE RUSSIAN PRESIDENT - NIGHT

Unlike his icy wife, PRESIDENT LEONID BUROVA (55) is sweating. As he talks on the phone, AIDES hand him updates on his government under siege.

PRESIDENT BUROVA
(on the phone)
I was afraid finding the cosmonaut would stop them.

Trying to hear Marina, he shouts at his advisors and they exit. The President nurses a glass of vodka --

PRESIDENT BUROVA (CONT'D)
(on the phone)
Crazy bastard -- left up there for years, but he still goes on with his job like a good soldier.

INTERCUT: MARINA IN LIMO / PRESIDENT BUROVA IN OFFICE

Marina listens to her husband's cynical comment.

MARINA BUROVA
He thought he was being attacked and sent the signals. That's all that matters.

PRESIDENT BUROVA
So I will tell General Rykov.

MARINA BUROVA
You talk too much to that old fool.

PRESIDENT BUROVA
He's my only hope now. I just found out in two days parliament will vote to remove me from office!

MARINA BUROVA
Leonid, don't panic. You do what I say and we'll get through this.

President Burova's expression sours as he listens to his wife.

PRESIDENT BUROVA
Of course... right... the beginning of the end.

He lifts his glass and drinks.

MARINA BUROVA
And in forty-eight hours I will be back with you.

PRESIDENT BUROVA
Yes, something else to look forward to.

Marina wonders if the morbid tone of his voice is from the distant connection.

In his office, President Burova picks up the phone again.

PRESIDENT BUROVA (CONT'D)
Call General Rykov.

INT. AN ABANDONED RUSSIAN HOSPITAL - NIGHT

"Security Consultant" ARKADY NAZARENKO (40, Rolex, suede jacket) sits with a cell phone in the hospital's shabby rec room.

NAZARENKO
I'll tell him.

He closes the phone, gets up and starts walking, scattering the stray dogs that roam wild in the halls. A legend reads:

BOLTUNOV PSYCHIATRIC CLINIC - MOSCOW

INT. A HOSPITAL ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

A terrible scar is slashed across GENERAL ANTON RYKOV's face, and one eye is missing. The other eye focuses on an old "National Geographic" he's holding.

The clinic's only patient, General Rykov (60) sits on an iron bed in the middle of an empty ward, surrounded by maps of the world he has pasted haphazardly to the tile walls.

A door opens. The general's head cocks, his good eye fixing on Nazarenko as he enters with a DOCTOR.

NAZARENKO
General -- the Americans have blown up SALYUT.

GENERAL RYKOV
And what about -- the laser signals?

NAZARENKO
They were received.

GENERAL RYKOV
(rambling strangely)
No one believed me -- but now -- the Americans will pay -- and soon -- soon you will see -- that I am -- General Rykov again.

Rykov sits up proudly and something CLANKS. He peers down at the shackles and chains on his ankles -- and the General's smile turns to a growl.

CUT TO:

INT. SPL COMMUNICATIONS ROOM - NIGHT

A TECHNICIAN at a bank of audio monitors grimaces as a **screeching** tone knifes through his earphones. He adjusts the volume, checks the frequency and calls to co-worker --

RADIO TECH
Jesus, I'm getting a major blast of "out-of-band" shit here.

INT. SPL GROUND CONTROL - THE BIG ROOM - AT THAT MOMENT

As the ATLANTIS prepares to return to earth, the night crew maintains vigilance. Exhausted, Jessie packs her briefcase. The TM sends a good night message to shuttle --

MISSION CONTROL (INTO RADIO)
The storm cancel on Florida is definite, Atlantis. But weather reports have Edwards clear and sunny for tomorrow's touch down.

INT. SPL THIRD FLOOR HALLWAY - LATER - NIGHT

As Jessie leaves she encounters a trio of concerned scientists conferring with the radio technician outside the commo room.

JESSIE
What's up?

FIRST SCIENTIST
It's that line noise that was coming down from SALYUT.

JESSIE
The signals Lightman was talking about?

RADIO TECH
Yeah. We're still receiving them.

JESSIE
That's impossible. We just nuked the space station to --

He turns up the speakers so she can hear the **screeching** signals.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(puzzled)
... to Kingdom Come.

INT. THIRD FLOOR ELEVATOR LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Jessie passes the dark tech offices -- and slows when she notices something through several layers of glass cubicles -- a single light on -- and a man.

In the distance, she sees the Russian scientist Viktor Herzen hovering over a computer console.

INT. ACROSS THE TECH ROOM

Viktor is keying in instructions on a computer. He waits -- and a photograph of the cosmonaut who was found aboard SALYUT-8 comes up on the monitor.

INT. AN ENGINEERING CUBICLE

Puzzled, Jessie enters. Hidden in the shadows, she watches Viktor in the distance. Then she turns on a computer.

Jessie brings up the server display of the network's computer positions. She clicks on the Russian's computer and logs onto the same download --

On her monitor she sees that Viktor is viewing a video replay of the crazed Russian cosmonaut shouting aboard SALYUT before he blasts himself into space.

Jessie taps the keyboard and an English translation comes over her computer's speakers --

COSMONAUT (TRANSLATED)
"We have been boarded... we are under attack... I need instructions..."

Through the maze of windows, Jessie sees Viktor at the far computer, keying in new commands.

Now a transmission link appears on Jessie's monitor. And she sees Russian Cyrillic characters filling the screen. She presses a key and the words are converted into English script:

REMOTE LINK.... CONNECTION.... MOSCOW AIR DEFENSE CENTER... SEARCHING FILES...

In a moment, another service photograph of the Russian cosmonaut comes up. Beneath the photo, his resumé appears:

Cosmonaut YURI ANDROPOV... parachute assault training, hand-to-hand combat, special weapons, sabotage. Graduated to "Spetsgruppa A". Assigned to OMON Unit, Baltic States for elimination of nationalist groups. Assigned to Condor Brigade (SVR) Afghanistan, for assassination of Afghan president. Transferred to Air Defense Command by order of GENERAL ANTON RYKOV...

Puzzled, Jessie pushes a button to print out the resumé.

INT. ACROSS THE TECH ROOM - AT THAT MOMENT

Viktor stares at the screen and looks amazed. Then he jumps as the door opens -- and Dmitry Gudin enters, looking irritated.

DMITRY
What're you doing?

VIKTOR
The cosmonaut was a Spetsnaz commando. A trained killer --

DMITRY
Go home, Viktor, it's late.

VIKTOR
What was he doing on a scientific space station?

DMITRY
I'm telling you -- don't get into this.

Viktor is surprised by the big man's threatening tone.

VIKTOR
So it's back to just be a good Russian, don't ask any questions, accept the lies?

A box flashes on the monitor: *"PRINTING TO TI MICROLASER..."*

DMITRY
Shit. Somebody is copying --

Dmitry looks off -- and Viktor also spots the eavesdropping figure through the layers of glass across the room.

INT. AN ENGINEERING CUBICLE

Jessie pulls the printout from the machine, looks up -- and realizes the Russians have spotted her. She jumps as her intercom blares --

DMITRY (OVER INTERCOM)
"What are you doing? Who is that?"

Jessie stands frozen and doesn't know what to say.

DMITRY (OVER INTERCOM) (CONT'D)
"This is classified information, you have no right to access this!"

She sees the two Russians starting to move through the other cubicles toward her. She starts for the door and goes out.

DMITRY (CONT'D)
(shouting)
Stay where you are!

Exiting the cubicle, Jessie sees that Dmitry and Viktor are heading across the room toward her.

INT. SEVERAL CUBICLES AWAY

Dmitry plows through doors and Viktor follows. They see Jessie going down the hall, stuffing the printout into her briefcase.

INT. THE HALL

Jessie attempts to look casual as she walks off -- until she looks back and sees the Russians barging out into the hall, and she moves faster toward the elevators.

Jessie hits the down button and looks frightened when she sees the Russians coming in her direction. The elevator bell rings its arrival -- and Jessie notices Dmitry starting to run now.

Startled, she looks around quickly, crosses the hall and shoves open a door.

INT. THE STAIRWELL

Hurrying down the steps, she hears the two men clambering down above her. She pushes open the door on the ground floor.

INT. GROUND FLOOR HALLWAY

Jessie actually starts running now.

INT. SPL LOBBY - NIGHT

The door bursts open, and a SECURITY GUARD looks up from his paper to see Jessie charging dramatically into the lobby.

SECURITY GUARD
You all right?

JESSIE
I was just -- they were --

Catching her breath, Jessie looks around at the door, but nobody else comes out. The guard looks at her strangely. Feeling foolish, she forces a nervous smile.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
In a hurry to get home. Good night.

The guard watches Jessie go out the door to the parking lot.

EXT. THE SPL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jessie walks to her Jeep Wagoneer. As she gets in, we see the two Russians in a second floor window watching her drive off.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BERKELEY HILLS - MORNING

A man-made pterodactyl suspended from a tree seems to soar above the distant city. Below it, a Jeep Wagoneer stops.

Jessie parks and gets out. She gazes up at the prehistoric flying reptile -- then she checks the address on a slip of paper, and discovers a stairway hidden in some trees.

EXT. A NARROW PATH - MOMENTS LATER

Arriving at a small gate, Jessie sees a pretty YOUNG WOMAN smiling at her.

YOUNG WOMAN
You here for the tour?

JESSIE
Uh... no?

EXT. DAVID LIGHTMAN'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Further up the walk, Jessie encounters a dozen people standing mesmerized next to a tour GUIDE --

GUIDE

Dr Lightman computer-designed this environmentally-evolved house. Not a single tree was cut to build it. It was constructed entirely of cheap recycled steel -- made from the gas-guzzling cars you and I drove back in the '70s.

Jessie stops, impressed by David's house, a shimmering post-industrial, post-modern, post-everything array of galvanized cubes. A Stealth house, bent into unexpected angles.

She edges past the group and goes to the front door. She knocks, but there's no answer. The door is ajar and she pushes it open.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - DAY

Jessie glances at the high-tech interior (and untidy housekeeping) -- until a voice over an intercom startles her:

DAVID (O.S.)

"The bathroom's the white door."

JESSIE

(startled)

What? I'm not -- Dr Lightman? It's Jessie Mayfield.

She hears a door open and sees David appear on a second-floor balcony. He comes downstairs --

DAVID

Thought you were one of the tree huggers. I'm trying to finish an article -- and forgot I'd promised the Environmental Defense Fund they could pollute my privacy this morning.

JESSIE

Another one of your good causes, Dr Lightman?

DAVID

Another one of your bad moods, Ms Mayday?

JESSIE

Mayfield. I'm just a little stressed because I didn't sleep last night. I kept obsessing about what happened.

DAVID

So why'd you call me -- the dogwash they tossed out the back door?

JESSIE
I figured you were the only person weird enough to believe me.

DAVID
I like your interpersonal skills.

JESSIE
I meant you worked at SPL -- however briefly -- and -- and okay -- maybe you were right -- we shouldn't've blown up the space station.

David is surprised and can restrain a victorious smile.

DAVID
I think I hear the sound of Olympic backpedaling. Something must've really scared the -- whatever out of you, Mayday.

JESSIE
(bristling)
I was not scared. I was just caught a little off guard by two men -- chasing me. I mean I'm not the type who loses my cool at every little --

VOICE (O.S.)
Hey --

Jessie jumps a mile, whirls and sees an OLD MAN in a golf cap.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
Where's the toilet? Or is taking a piss ecologically incorrect now?

JESSIE
(angrily)
It's the white door, damn it! Quit sneaking up on people.

The old man retreats. Jessie tries to collect herself.

DAVID
Would you like a cup of coffee? A couple Valium?

She returns his helpful smile with a sour look.

EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY

The tour guide and his group stand outside the kitchen.

GUIDE
The house is 100% solar powered. You can see the photovoltaic solar cells on the roof, which is made of recycled rubber tires. And there's Dr. Lightman himself, using his natural gas stove to prepare what I'm sure is an organic --

INT. DAVID'S KITCHEN

At the sink, David pretends not to see the group peering in at him as if he's an aquarium fish. He casually picks his nose. The group disperses in disgust.

David goes over to where Jessie is sitting and pours her a cup of hot water. She dunks an herb tea bag in it.

DAVID
Maybe they're just two wild and crazy Russians -- who find your "disciplinarian" style attractive.

JESSIE
Or maybe I'm just overworked and sinking into paranoia --

DAVID
Powell not wanting to listen doesn't surprise me. Any trouble and he goes into his "Where's Waldo?" mode.

David picks up a piece of paper and studies it.

DAVID (CONT'D)
This is the printout you made?

JESSIE
Yes, so I wasn't totally hallucinating. That's what the two Russians were downloading from Moscow.

DAVID
According to this, Yuri the lonely cosmonaut was a killer commando. Which means, in the great Cold War tradition of Soviet deception, that old space station wasn't for research -- but for some military purpose.

JESSIE
And what about the laser signals that we're still receiving -- after the space station was obliterated?

Jessie jumps as her beeper goes off. She finds it in her purse and checks the number --

JESSIE (CONT'D)
It's Karen.

Jessie's puzzled when David picks up his phone, seems to know what number to dial, and hands it to her.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(talking on the phone)
Hey, what's going on?
(listening)
Powell wants me to what?! He's got to be kidding? He is a real --

DAVID
Dipshit pencil-dick.

JESSIE
(on the phone)
Dipshit pencil-dick.
(listening to Karen)
Yeah... How'd you know I was with Dr Lightman?

DAVID
Karen was my secretary too.
(louder to the phone)
Morning Karen.
(then to Jessie)
She hated me.

JESSIE
(listening to the phone)
She says she didn't appreciate being told she consumed too much electricity.
(listening again)
What?... No, I'm at his house... right, it certainly is... Bye.

DAVID
What'd she say about me?

JESSIE
She said you built yourself the perfect house, too bad you couldn't build the perfect woman to live in it with you.

DAVID
I miss Karen's deep insights -- direct from the "Psychic Love Connection".

Jessie picks up her bag and starts to leave.

DAVID (CONT'D)
What else did she tell you?

JESSIE
Oh, quit ego surfing. It wasn't about you. It was about Powell -- making me run errands like a damn trainee.

DAVID
What's he want you to do?

JESSIE
Drive down to Edwards Air Force Base -- right now -- and log in all the damn gear off the Atlantis shuttle.

DAVID
He's trying to get rid of you.

He follows Jessie out of the kitchen.

JESSIE
What?

DAVID
Because you know too much. He doesn't want you around.

JESSIE
Right. Another cover-up. Listen --

DAVID
Did the astronauts remove the Russian command module before they blew up SALYUT?

JESSIE
I don't know. I guess. That was the flight plan.

He follows her across the living room.

DAVID
So they'll be bringing it back when they land at Edwards. Hey, maybe I'll drive down there with you.

JESSIE
Hey, maybe I'll win the Nobel Prize for Science.

DAVID
Seriously. The command module's like the black box on a plane -- it'll tell us what the hell was really going on up there.

JESSIE
No it won't. Because there is no way I'm taking you with me. I've got enough problems at SPL without --

DAVID
Didn't you say you're concerned about suspicious things going down?

JESSIE
Yeah, but --

DAVID
But when push comes to shove you're afraid any protest could be a Career-Limiting Move.

Jessie glares at him, her anger revealing the truth.

JESSIE
Maybe you can afford to be fired. You've got tenure at the university, you've got your writing -- I've seen your book flap.

DAVID
(flattered)
Oh, you read my book?

JESSIE
No, just the flap! It said you grew up skateboarding through suburbia -- well, I grew up getting mugged in alleys! I had to fight -- like literally -- to get through school. To get scholarships. To get this job at SPL. Which was a miracle.

David's touched by her honesty.

DAVID
No, it wasn't. They needed somebody really smart.

It's Jessie's turn to be surprised. Until he ruins it --

DAVID (CONT'D)
I mean hell, they were replacing me.

JESSIE
(after a moment)
Yeah, with an environmental rubber stamp who'll green wash their "hazardous to your health" operations.
(shrugging)
Isn't that what you think I am?

DAVID
This isn't much of a fight -- me
listening to you beat yourself up.

JESSIE
It's all true.

DAVID
You came to blow the whistle, Mayday.
Trust your instincts. I think they're
good ones.

JESSIE
What an honor. I got a benediction
from his holiness the Dali Lightman.

DAVID
(smiling faintly)
So what do you say we go find out
what's in the black box?

Jessie looks conflicted.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE RUSSIAN TRADE CENTER - DAY

The building rises twenty-stories above the financial district. Three large trucks disappear into its underground garage, passing local news vans and camera crews out in front.

A TV reporter finishes a live feed:

TV REPORTER
The new Russian Trade Center will be
unveiled next week. But Marina Burova,
the wife of the Russian President,
has just been given a preview inside --

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE TRADE CENTER

Bodyguards hover as Marina Burova faces a mob of reporters.

MARINA BUROVA
No, no, my husband still has the
support of the Russian people.

REPORTER
Then why did he cancel the upcoming
elections?

MARINA BUROVA
In order to save our country, we must
have a stable government.

ANOTHER REPORTER
Mrs Burova, isn't your husband using
old Cold War anti-American sentiments --
to cover the severe economic problems
Russia is suffering?

Martina's face ices up -- until she ignites her famous smile.

MARINA BUROVA
Please, I came here today to give a
woman's advice on curtain fabrics, on
the flower arrangements inside. So
your rough tough questions I will
have to pass on to my husband.
(laughing)
I only handle Russia's interior
decorating problems.

INT. THE TRADE CENTER LOBBY - MOMENTS LATER

Marina storms back inside. Spotting Sergey Sherbo exiting an elevator (with scientist Dmitry Gudin), Marina flames him with vicious Russian curses. Then --

MARINA BUROVA
Where were you, you Latvian weasel?!
How could you let me go out there! I
was ambushed by their media scum!

SHERBO
I'm sorry. I was busy -- we have
another problem.

MARINA BUROVA
What problem?!

DMITRY
(on Sherbo's cue)
The Americans know the cosmonaut was
a Spetsnaz commando -- and that the
signals are continuing.

Marina glances at Dmitry like he's a contemptible rodent, then vectors her wrath on Sherbo.

MARINA BUROVA
You will make sure the Americans learn
nothing else. If I have any more
problems -- I will also have your
balls.

INT. TRADE CENTER UNDERGROUND GARAGE - LATER - NIGHT

Viktor Herzen watches trucks unloading telecommunications equipment, generators, cases of bottled water. Then he hears Sherbo shouting at Dmitry as they emerge from an elevator.

Watched by menacingly-dour Russian embassy security guards, Dmitry walks off in humiliation and rejoins Viktor. They walk to the gray SPL van they came in.

VIKTOR
What are all the emergency generators
and communications equipment for?

DMITRY
Shut up. You're in this now -- just
do what you're told.

VIKTOR
And if I say no? What will the
President's wife do to me -- have me
removed from the Academy of Science?

DMITRY
No Viktor, she will make sure you
have left your heart in San Francisco --
along with your other body parts.

Dmitry climbs into the van. Looking paranoid, Viktor gets in the other side.

CUT TO:

EXT. CALIFORNIA HIGH DESERT - AFTERNOON

Joshua trees march past as the Jeep Wagoneer travels southeast into the Mojave Desert.

INT. JESSIE'S CAR - AFTERNOON

As Jessie drives, David sees a sign ahead that reads "EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE - Exit 5 Miles".

JESSIE
How'd I let you talk me into this?
"Trust your instincts" -- you do your
Yoda number and my brain flat-lines.

DAVID
What's the worst that can happen?

JESSIE
Uh, getting arrested because you don't
have a security clearance?

DAVID
It won't be the first time.

JESSIE
No, when it comes to lost causes you're
obviously a repeat offender.
(MORE)

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(seriously)
What I don't understand -- is why?

David looks out the window and his usual flip tone subsides.

DAVID
When I was kid I met a man who lived alone on an island. He'd lost his wife and son -- and was so bitter he was willing to let the world around him go to hell. I swore to myself I wouldn't end up like him.

JESSIE
So instead _you_ decided to save the world -- and never risk having a wife and son you might lose?

David looks at her, surprised by her insight. They ride in a silence a moment -- until the car phone rings and Jessie answers it "hands-free".

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Hello?

KAREN (OVER SPEAKERPHONE)
"Jessie, it's your Surgeon General warning you -- Lightman can be hazardous to your health."

DAVID
(speaking at the mike)
Morning, Karen. You ready to do this? Or do I send copies of your petty cash reports to the DA's office?

KAREN (OVER SPEAKERPHONE)
"Very funny."

INT. SPL - JESSIE'S OUTER OFFICE - AT THAT MOMENT

KAREN stands by her desk on the phone.

KAREN
I'm only doing this because Jessie asked me to -- against my better judgment.

INT. THE WAGONEER

Just as Jessie hangs up the phone, a THUNDERING BOOM shakes the car and they both duck instinctively.

JESSIE
I hate when that happens.

DAVID
Sonic boom. The shuttle's right on time.

EXT. EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE - RUNWAY - AFTERNOON

The ATLANTIS shuttle touches down on the shimmering lakebed runway. In a moment, its aft parachute deploys.

EXT. THE RUNWAY - LATER - AFTERNOON

Utility tractors head toward the parked shuttle. The astronauts come down the steps as news cameras record them.

EXT. MAIN GATE - MARINE GUARD HOUSE - AFTERNOON

A Marine CORPORAL peers down at Jessie and David in the Wagoneer. Then the Marine steps into his gate house and picks up a phone.

INT. SPL - SECURITY OFFICE - AT THAT MOMENT

As a diversion, Karen has already sent the Security ASSISTANT searching for a file in the boss's office.

KAREN
Jessie was real positive she gave that file to Bill.

So when the phone rings on the outer desk, Karen can help out.

KAREN (CONT'D)
I got it.
(on phone)
Hello?

INT. MARINE GATE HOUSE - AT THAT MOMENT

The Marine guard studies Jessie's ID as the Wagoneer waits outside.

MARINE CORPORAL
(on the phone)
This is Marine security at Edwards. I've got a Ms. Mayfield here who's on the list you faxed us. But there's a Dr. Lightman with her who's not.

INT. THE WAGONEER

David lifts the handset and places a call on the car phone.

INT. SPL - SECURITY OFFICE

As Karen talks to the gate guard, a second line rings --

KAREN
Hold just one second Edwards.
(answering line two)
Hello? SPL Security.

INT. THE WAGONEER

David glances over at the gate guard as he speaks to Karen --

DAVID
It's me -- the health hazard. Put us on conference.

INT. SPL - SECURITY OFFICE

Karen pushes the "conference" button and connects the two calls. Then she heads into the office to join the busy assistant.

KAREN
They hung up. Let me help you look for that.

We see the phone on the desk flashing on "conference"...

INTERCUT: THE MARINE GATE GUARD / DAVID IN WAGONEER

Looking away from the gate house, David speaks into the phone.

DAVID
Hello, Edwards, this is Richard Lionheart, SPL security officer.

Five yards away in the gate house, the guard speaks into his phone.

MARINE CORPORAL
Sir, I've got a David Lightman here who says he's from SPL?

David answers authoritatively from the Wagoneer.

DAVID
Yes, that's right, Dr Lightman should be accompanying Jessie Mayfield.

MARINE CORPORAL
Thank you, sir. Just needed verification.

DAVID
No problem. By the way Lightman's one of our best and brightest, treat him like a VIP.

Jessie can't believe David's con. He hangs up and sees the guard hang up, then step over and bend to speak to them.

MARINE CORPORAL
All right, mam, you may proceed. And welcome to Edwards Air Force Base, Dr. Lightman. We're honored to have you.

DAVID
Nice to be here, corporal.

Jessie receives their clip-on badges and accelerates as the gate rises. She shakes her head, but we see a faint smile --

JESSIE
You are such a quantum lowlife.

CUT TO:

INT. STORAGE FACILITY - SUNSET

David and Jessie follow an Air Force STAFF SERGEANT into a monolithic storage facility. Tractors haul in the last cargo containers from the ATLANTIS shuttle.

The sergeant leads them to two containers that have just been emptied of all the material brought down from SALYUT.

STAFF SERGEANT
Welcome to our Russian yard sale. If you need anything, I'll be in my office.

The sergeant goes off. David and Jessie poke through old Soviet space suits, rusted experimental equipment, log books -- David finds a tattered copy of a Russian porno magazine.

DAVID
Comrade Playgirl -- little kinky stuff to while away the lonely hours.

JESSIE
Obviously speaking from first hand experience. Look at these maps.
(perusing them)
Cuba... the Russian Shumagin Islands, the Bering Strait...

But something else catches David's eye. He steps over and drags out a piece of old Soviet equipment.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
What's that? MF radar?

DAVID
No, this is the cosmic ray Scud that junked Sam's science project. But it's one dead Scud now.

JESSIE
David -- I see the main console.

He maneuvers after her among the equipment and kneels by a large console covered with broken displays, worn buttons and dials.

DAVID
Soviet antique. The module with the
mission recordings should be inside --

Poking around, David releases a door and reveals the command module, the small computer "brain" inside. As he tries to remove it, the sergeant walks past.

STAFF SERGEANT
This is a real popular attraction.
Some more visitors from your team
just showed up.

David and Jessie exchange worried looks.

JESSIE
Oh yeah -- who's here, sergeant?

STAFF SERGEANT
Couple of Russians --

DAVID
(eyeing Jessie)
Really?

STAFF SERGEANT
At Edwards Air Force Base -- not like
the old days. But hell, I guess it's
their junk we brought down.

He walks off toward the distant door. David looks at Jessie.

DAVID
I'll bet it's your two admirers.

Suddenly they both jump when the small module starts making a static-cloaked, high-pitched shrieking noise.

JESSIE
There it is again. That's the signal
we intercepted at SPL.

DAVID
This module's receiving them too.

JESSIE
But from where?

David looks over sees the sergeant disappearing through a door.

DAVID
A question that will go unanswered if
your Slavic friends get this.

David pulls his trusty Buck Multi-tool out of his pocket, kneels and starts jimmying the small module.

JESSIE
What are you doing? David?

INT. A HALLWAY - AT THAT MOMENT

Viktor and Dmitry follow the Staff Sergeant down the hall toward the storage warehouse.

INT. THE STORAGE FACILITY

David's having trouble prying the module loose. Jessie looks across the storage facility --

JESSIE
They're coming, they're going to see
what you're doing -- and I don't know
you!

DAVID
The damn frame's bent.

Finally, the small command module springs free, and David stands with it. Jessie sees the module's about the size of a videocassette. Then she sees David shove it into his jacket pocket!

DAVID (CONT'D)
What module? Must've been lost in
space, comrades.

JESSIE
David -- you can't do this.

David glances across the warehouse at the door, looks around for another way out --

DAVID
So, you want to get some lunch?

INT. STORAGE FACILITY - THE FAR DOORS

The Staff Sergeant holds the doors for the two Russians. He eyes their VISITOR security tags as they head down the aisles of storage toward the newly arrived containers.

STAFF SERGEANT
I hear your country shrunk a little.
Is it true they opened an In-And-Out
Burger in Red Square?

When they finally arrive at the mass of material from the shuttle, the sergeant looks around and seems surprised --

STAFF SERGEANT (CONT'D)
I guess they left.

Viktor and Dmitry aren't pleased. They speak to each other in Russian and quickly start plowing through the old equipment -- throwing aside gear, knocking over electronics.

STAFF SERGEANT (CONT'D)
You boys obviously don't work by the hour...

The sergeant looks off at the last tractor driving away from the loading dock, towing two empty cargo containers behind it.

EXT. THE EDWARDS STORAGE FACILITY - SUNSET

The tractor accelerates as it pulls the cargo containers away.

INT. A CARGO CONTAINER

Inside the rolling container, David and Jessie ride on empty aluminum crates. Frightened, anxious, morose, Jessie watches David examine the small command module --

JESSIE
Okay, damn it, I did read your book, and I laughed at your commentaries on NPR, was blown away by your "Spaceship Earth" documentary on TV. The horrible truth is -- I'm a big fan of yours.

DAVID
(studying the module)
Cool. But why are you telling -- ?

JESSIE
Because I'm begging you to stop trashing my life. I mean if it's revenge for me taking your job, you've succeeded big time. Look at me -- I've become a whimpering fugitive -- hiding out in a fucking cargo container! Are you happy?! Are you even listening?!

INT. THE STORAGE FACILITY - LATER

Dmitry and Viktor stare at the empty bay in the console --

DMITRY
It's gone.

He glares at the puzzled master sergeant.

DMITRY (CONT'D)
The command module is missing. What kind of damn security do you have here?!

STAFF SERGEANT
(bristling)
Now listen, Ivan -- I'm an American and a Staff Sergeant -- so nobody shouts profanities at me!

DMITRY
They took it -- where did they go?

Swearing in Russian, Dmitry stalks off and Viktor follows him.

STAFF SERGEANT
Yeah, well give me the Cold War. Enough of this bonding bullshit.

EXT. THE MOTOR POOL - TWILIGHT

The tractor stops. An Airman gets out and unlocks a shed. He doesn't notice David and Jessie exit the last cargo container -- and quickly walk away from the motor pool.

EXT. VISITORS' AREA - TWILIGHT

David and Jessie turn a corner and find themselves attending a press conference. On a raised platform, NASA officials and the ATLANTIS astronauts are facing a crowd of journalists.

NASA OFFICIAL
We hope this success paves the way for more cooperation between our two countries and will promote a better --

David suddenly grabs Jessie's arm and leads her off. As they maneuver through the crowd, Jessie glances around and sees Viktor and Dmitry coming from the storage facility.

EXT. VISITORS' AREA - TWILIGHT

Arriving at the press conference, the two Russians search the sea of faces for David and Jessie. To no avail. Until Dmitry notices something else.

As twilight descends on the base, the Russians see Jessie's Jeep Wagoneer headed toward the front gate.

EXT. PARKING AREA - MOMENTS LATER

Dmitry and Viktor run to a gray van with "Space Propulsion Laboratory" markings on the side. They climb in quickly.

EXT. MAIN GATE - MARINE GUARD HOUSE - TWILIGHT

The Wagoneer stops at the gate. The Marine guard sees David behind the wheel.

DAVID
We bumped into a couple of Russians who said they were from SPL.

MARINE CORPORAL
They entered right after you did, Dr Lightman.

DAVID
Funny, we've never seen either of them before. Granted SPL's a big place -- but it did set off a security alarm in my head -- you know what I mean, corporal?

MARINE CORPORAL
Yes sir. I'll check into it.

INT. THE WAGONEER

David accelerates. Jessie looks doomed.

JESSIE
We just stole classified material from a U.S. Air Force Base. That is a crime. A federal crime. Maybe worse.

DAVID
A global crime? A galactic crime?

JESSIE
You ever think about recycling your sense of humor?

She looks back at the main gate receding behind them.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Oh shit. There's an SPL van -- it's them. They're following us.

DAVID
I don't think so.

EXT. MAIN GATE - MARINE GUARD HOUSE - EVENING

Speeding to the gate, the Russians in the van are stopped by the Marine guard, who gives Dmitry Gudin a 'Semper Fi' look.

MARINE CORPORAL
Identification please.

DMITRY
We showed you when we came in. We don't have time!

MARINE CORPORAL
Would you please step out of the car. Both of you -- now.

Another Marine guard comes over carrying an automatic weapon.

DMITRY
You don't understand, they stole Russian property! You have no right to do this!

Protesting in Russian and English, Dmitry and Viktor climb out of the van -- as the Wagoneer heads off down the highway.

CUT TO:

EXT. UC BERKELEY CAMPUS - NIGHT

The Campanile Tower chimes midnight. Study-hearties leave the library, but lights still glow in the SCIENCE BUILDING -- and David and Jessie head up its steps.

INT. THE SCIENCE BUILDING - NIGHT

Inside, Jessie irritably follows David up the stairway.

JESSIE
You can fight your own crusades. In the morning I give back the module and plead temporary insanity. That's the deal, David.

DAVID
Not until we learn what's inside it.

JESSIE
Okay then, revised deal: I turn state's evidence and blame this whole goddamn nightmare on you.

INT. HALLWAY AND LABS - NIGHT

They pass labs in which grad students work after hours.

DAVID
This guy is the Ayatollah of Hackers. Undisputed mega-genius.

INT. COMPUTER SCIENCES LAB

David opens the door and Jessie enters.

SAM

Yo, Dr. Lightman -- and foxy lady.

Young Sam works at a bench with computer guts spilled around him and motherboards hanging from wires like laundry.

JESSIE

You've got to be kidding -- Cyber Dude?

But the real mega-genius, JIM STING (35, longhaired hacker-turned-TA), appears now out of an equipment room.

JIM

The Light Man cometh. Got your SOS.

DAVID

This is Jessie. How's Sam working out?

JIM

You were right, the kid's rude, anti-social. I like him. Definite wirehead material. What's that?

David takes the module out of his pocket and hands it to Jim.

DAVID

You tell us.

As Jim examines the module under a light, he notices Jessie viewing a wall of old photos.

JIM

Me and The Light Man go way back.

Jessie sees a framed newspaper photo showing David atop a wave-washed Soviet submarine, defiantly holding a banner that reads "NO RED STAR NUKES!"

JESSIE

I remember the "Red Star". It was a disabled Russian submarine they found years ago.

SAM

Jim said the US Navy was trying to sneak the sub into San Francisco bay --

DAVID

(a bit nostalgic)

Of course it was loaded with thermonuclear missiles set to launch.

Another photo shows David and Jim being handcuffed by Military Police and federal agents.

JESSIE
Looks like the Navy won.

JIM
They got their sub and we got sixty
days in San Mateo jail.

Jim has pried open the module and peers at its guts.

JIM (CONT'D)
Shit, this really is a Russian antiquo
bizarro.

Suddenly the door bursts open, and MALVIN (32, world class, extreme techno-nerd) enters out of breath.

MALVIN
Okay, people, don't worry, I'm here.

Malvin goes to the window and waves once to somebody.

MALVIN (CONT'D)
And I woulda been here sooner, but my
mother couldn't find a parking place.

DAVID
(as they study the module)
So you think one of your museum pieces
could download this thing?

INT. AN ELEVATOR - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

David and Jessie ride up a freight elevator with Jim, Sam and Malvin.

INT. TOP FLOOR HALLWAY

Exiting the elevator, they watch Jim unlock a padlock and two dead-bolts. Then he swings open the old metal door.

INT. THE TOP FLOOR "MUSEUM"

Malvin turns on lights. Jessie looks around in amazement. It's a vast warehouse -- like the one at the end of "Citizen Kane". Only this one contains rows of dusty computer equipment.

As Jim and Malvin start their search, David, Jessie and Sam wander through a Madame Tussaud's of microelectronics -- from the earliest UNIVACS and ENIACS, to the first key punch models...

Jessie sees David and Sam have stopped and are looking at their own reflections on the monitor of an early desktop.

DAVID
This one I donated to the museum.
(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)
I fought a big war game on it -- and prevented World War III. Me and Jennifer.

Sam notes David's nostalgic smile. As does Jessie.

SAM
This Jennifer was like a real babe?

JESSIE
About as real as David thinking he saved the world.

Suddenly they hear a shrill sound from two aisles over.

MALVIN (O.S.)
Attention shoppers -- your module's going ape shit!

INT. ANOTHER AISLE

David, Jessie and Sam find Malvin and Jim standing over the small module which lays screeching on a work table.

JESSIE
That's the signal it was receiving before.

DAVID
So great Wizard, give us your insights.

JIM
In technical terms -- this is weird shit. Maybe if we could filter out the side-bands -- where's our old Russian -- ?

MALVIN
You mean the Yak? Yeah, the Yak!

Malvin and Jim hurry off. David notices Jessie looking at him like she could kill him.

JESSIE
The Yak...?

Down the aisle Malvin and Jim are grunting and straining as they haul out an old piece of equipment...

INT. THE "MUSEUM" WORK AREA - LATER - NIGHT

They hook up an old mainframe computer and it starts humming.

MALVIN
The Yakolev Model 286. Vintage 1979.

JIM

The Soviets claimed Bill Gates stole
all his ideas from this little monster.

Cables and cords snake from the Yak across the floor to the command module, which sits on a table like a tiny patient wired to life support.

DAVID

Okay, Babushka -- have a seat.

JESSIE

What?

He sinks her into a chair and wheels it to the Yak's console.

DAVID

It's got to be keyed in Russian.
First try an SQL interface.

The old monitor starts glowing. Jessie pulls cobwebs from the keyboard and starts keying in commands.

JIM

Debug your data overlay. Change it
to "Stop If F3".

JESSIE

Easy for you to say -- try it in
Russian.

But as she keys, the screeching tones change dramatically in pitch and speed.

JESSIE (CONT'D)

It's working.

SAM

Cool beans -- now the laser pulses
sound like encoded transmissions.

DAVID

That's right. What we got here are
scrambled messages.

MALVIN

Then this is a job for Mr Vectronics,
Descrambler Man. Where is he? I
loved that guy.

Malvin quickly locates a dusty unit and yanks it off a shelf. Jim hooks it up and now the tones become a Russian voice, but out-of-phase and badly distorted.

JESSIE
It sounds like Russian, but I can't understand --

DAVID
That's because it's security encrypted -- and we're at El Deadendo. It could take weeks to debug the encryption.

The three men stare at the machine and seem defeated.

SAM
No. Move. I got it, I got it.

They watch Sam pull a Psion 5 palmtop computer out of his pocket. He attaches it to the old Yak and starts keying the tiny Psion with his thumbs.

SAM (CONT'D)
If I just tweak this a micro-mung...

Suddenly the distorted Russian voice falls into phase and becomes clear!

DAVID
(amazed)
How'd you do that?

SAM
Used my Pornorama.

DAVID
Pornorama?

SAM
Code key I invented to surf the X-rated smut on the Internet -- my dufus parents thought they had it locked.

DAVID
I admire your dirty mind -- and pity your parents.

JESSIE
Quiet. I can understand it now.

She listens to the digitized Russian voice and translates:

JESSIE (CONT'D)
It's saying that the -- the "Rykov Protocol" has been initiated -- and that "Phase One" will launch at zero-800 hours.

DAVID
What's the "Rykov Protocol"?

JIM
What's "Phase One"?

MALVIN
Whatever it is, if it started at zero-800, that was eight hours ago.

DAVID
Unless they mean zero-800 Greenwich Mean --

JESSIE
(checking her watch)
Which would be -- just about now.

Suddenly a cable attached to the command module POPS, SPARKS, and SHORTS. They all jump and watch the computer screen die.

JIM
Damn it, blew a fuse. Pull the plug. We'll have to reset --

Malvin bends down to yank the plug -- just as the wall receptacle SPARKS. He yelps and jumps back. Down the wall there's another SMALL EXPLOSION as another receptacle blows -- and another.

Now the wiring inside the walls starts to EXPLODE -- and **suddenly the whole warehouse is a 4TH OF JULY FIREWORKS DISPLAY** as its entire electrical system is blitzed.

Shouting, ducking the SHOWERING SPARKS, David and the others try to find cover --

JIM (CONT'D)
It's the circuit breakers. Malvin, I told you to fix them!

DAVID
No, it's not a short. Look outside -- this is just the tip of the ice cube...

Through a large window, they see pole lights SPARKING AND EXPLODING outside the building -- and more ELECTRICAL EXPLOSIONS erupting inside other UC buildings.

SAM
Something's zappin' the whole town!

They watch electrical transformers FLARING in a chain-reaction down the hill into the city of Berkeley. And then, **Berkeley goes dark**.

JESSIE
It's still going.

SAM
And going, and going.

MALVIN
Wow, this is one humongous power dump.

The EXPLOSIONS and ERUPTING TRANSFORMERS continue to the bay -- and across it, until the rolling BLACKOUT hits San Francisco, and **all the city's lights goes out**. Then silence.

David and the others stare out at the total darkness beyond the moonlit bay. Jessie looks at the small module on the table --

JESSIE
David -- the message we got said "Phase One" was starting. You think this -- could be that?

DAVID
You are a chronic worrier, Mayday. And this time you should be...

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - RUSSIAN TRADE CENTER - NIGHT

A few emergency lights twinkle in the black panorama. A Russian crew adjusts a small dish antenna, and a gas generator powers the portable communications system they've set up.

STAFFER
Satellite link is up.

Sherbo takes the phone from the man and speaks into it.

INT. RUSSIAN TRADE CENTER - EXECUTIVE OFFICE - NIGHT

Marina Burova, wife of the Russian president, surveys the darkened city through the penthouse windows. Sergey Sherbo sees her smile faintly as she speaks on the phone.

MARINA BUROVA
Leonid, it is dark here in America -- very dark.

INT. KREMLIN - OFFICE OF THE RUSSIAN PRESIDENT - DAY

Haggard, but relieved, Leonid Burova listens to his wife.

PRESIDENT BUROVA
So we can tell General Rykov that his wet dream is coming true.

MARINA BUROVA (OVER TELEPHONE)
"If his brain is clear enough to understand."

INT. BOLTUNOV CLINIC, MOSCOW - GENERAL RYKOV'S ROOM - DAY

A wild dog devours scraps of food being dropped on the floor by General Anton Rykov, who sits on the edge of his hospital bed. A bodyguard wearing a shoulder holster hands Rykov a phone.

As Rykov listens to Marina on the other end, he focuses his one good eye on a wall clock.

GENERAL RYKOV
(on the phone)
So, Marina Burova, this is good -- in eighteen hours -- very soon -- watch the skies. One more sunset -- will be their last.

Rykov tosses the remaining meat to the ravenous dog.

CUT TO:

EXT. A BERKELEY STREET - NIGHT

The Wagoneer heads into the darkened city.

INT. JESSIE'S CAR

As Jessie drives, David attempts to call out on her cell phone, gives up and shoves it back into her purse.

DAVID
No bells, no whistles. Stone silence. You're gonna save big on air time.

JESSIE
So how do we let SPL know that the module has something to do with this outage?

They see cars jamming up behind dead traffic signals -- and people emerging from dark buildings into the streets.

DAVID
Welcome to gridlock. You'll have to pull over.

EXT. THE STREET - NIGHT

Jessie parks her Wagoneer. They get out and join a growing crowd heading toward Shattuck. David detours to a pay phone, lifts the receiver -- silence.

STREET PERSON
Ma Bell's down, man. The whole world's down!

EXT. SHATTUCK STREET - NIGHT

David and Jessie push past people with candles and flashlights. Bonfires flame from trash barrels. Street musicians blare and religious nuts are already shouting prophesies of the apocalypse.

EXT. THE SIDEWALK - NIGHT

David and Jessie pass a stereo store where battery radios are tuned to an emergency channel --

RECORDED RADIO VOICE
" -- this is the Emergency Radio Network. Stay tuned to this station for a report on the current situation and instructions on how to -- "

EXT. POLICE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM - NIGHT

While police try to unsnarl traffic, David and Jessie approach two cops by a black & white communications van.

DAVID
Officer? I noticed your antennas -- you have a radio transmitter working?

POLICE OFFICER
Just keep moving folks.

DAVID
I've got to make an important call to the Space Propulsion Laboratory.

POLICE SERGEANT
This is only for police use. It's not a civilian --

JESSIE
(interrupting)
But this is an emergency.

POLICE SERGEANT
No kidding.

The cops are called away, and Jessie notices David immediately edging around the back of the police van.

JESSIE
What're you -- David?

EXT. REAR OF POLICE VAN - NIGHT

David checks to see that the coast is clear, then lifts a panel and inspects the wires coming out of the communications van.

DAVID
I can spike into these wires.

David starts pulling them from the van's panel. Jessie looks around, terrified they'll be caught.

JESSIE
No. You can't do that --

DAVID
Sure I can -- if I use your --

David grabs her cell phone from her purse.

JESSIE
Stop it -- give me that -- you're not going to -- I've had enough of --
(looking off)
Oh shit, there's a cop coming. David?

She looks back -- David's gone. She looks down -- he's sliding underneath the police van pulling the wires with him.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Get up! You can't leave me with --

DAVID
Don't talk to me. Just watch out for --

JESSIE
(loudly)
Hello, officer!

EXT. UNDERNEATH THE POLICE VAN

Lying in the shadows under the van, David sees Jessie's legs -- and the legs of an arriving cop. Pulling out his Buck Multi-tool, David strips the wires he's "borrowed" from the van.

EXT. NEXT TO THE POLICE VAN

The cop looks at Jessie as he unlocks a parked squad car.

COPS
You all right?

JESSIE
Bottom line? No. I mean, I just --

The cop opens the door and pulls a shotgun out of the car for possible riot control. Jessie's eyes widen --

JESSIE (CONT'D)
I just -- well, it's been a weird chain of events --
(MORE)

JESSIE (CONT'D)
(rambling to herself)
One minute -- I'm part of an astronaut mission in space --

EXT. UNDERNEATH THE POLICE VAN

David hears Jessie jabbering to the cop as he connects the wires to her cell phone.

EXT. NEXT TO THE POLICE VAN

The cop finishes checking the shotgun and then eyes Jessie.

JESSIE
Next thing I know I'm being chased by Russians, and stealing equipment from an Air Force base --

COP
Listen, are you on something? Tell me what you've --

JESSIE
What? On something?

COP
Drugs -- what'd you take?

EXT. UNDERNEATH THE POLICE VAN

David is dialing the cell phone, but it's not working. Damn.

EXT. NEXT TO THE POLICE VAN

Jessie is furious with the suspicious cop.

JESSIE
What're you talking about? I don't even drink coffee! On something -- yeah right, herb tea! I had a Power Bar yesterday! So arrest me!

The cop gives her a sullen look and goes off to take care of more important matters.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
On something?! Yeah, I'm on you, officer! What's your badge number?

DAVID
Jessie, shut up, he's gone! And this isn't working. Unless -- hold on. What if I use the module's relay capacitor --

Fuming, Jessie looks under the van. David lies on his back adding wires from her cell phone to the command module resting on his stomach. He dials, listens -- and gets a tone.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Yes. It worked. "Hello operator, this is the Big Bopper".

Jessie just shakes her head glumly.

CUT TO:

INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - NIGHT

Flashlight beams criss-cross down a crowded hallway. Unshaven, unhappy, Ed Traxler accompanies GRIFFIN, an over-worked DOD agent toward his dark office. A legend appears:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE - WESTERN REGIONAL OFFICE

TRAXLER
It's no different than the power outage last year -- some beaver in Oregon bites a tree, tree hits a transformer, suddenly my wife's yakking that her VCR's flashing. What's with our back-up generators?

GRIFFIN
They discovered the gas in the cans was old.

TRAXLER
Who discovered -- the FBI?

GRIFFIN
They're getting new gas.

An ASSISTANT pops into the hall and blinds Traxler with his flashlight. Growling, Traxler swipes at the light.

ASSISTANT
We have an emergency radio up and there's a call for you.

TRAXLER
You had to tell 'em I was here?

INT. RADIO OFFICE

Traxler trudges into the office, where a battery lamp glows by a radio transmitter.

ASSISTANT
SPL transferred it. It's a guy named Lightman. He sounds -- intense.

TRAXLER
Lightman? Christ, I really need this.

EXT. BENEATH THE POLICE VAN - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

Lying on his back, David watches Jessie's legs pacing next to the van -- and hears Traxler's voice on the phone he's rigged.

DAVID
Who warned them not to blow up the SALYUT space station? But nobody listened and this is what happens!

INTERCUT: DAVID UNDER VAN / TRAXLER IN DOD OFFICE

TRAXLER
Lightman, it's late, it's dark, and I hate jerk-offs who say "I told you so".

DAVID
Listen, when we punched into the command module from the Russian space station, some kind of raster blaster triggered this blackout --

Traxler covers the phone and speaks to the assistant.

TRAXLER
Find out how and where Lightman hooked into this emergency line.
(back on the phone)
So okay -- this was something you triggered?

DAVID
Traxler, I'm trying to take into account your room temperature IQ -- No, I didn't trigger it! We heard an encrypted message being sent that triggered it.

Now Griffin hands Traxler a book and aims his flashlight at a passage he's marked --

TRAXLER
You know what just struck me? This is real similar to a scenario you predicted in --
(checking the book jacket)
"The Tyranny of Technology" -- this is the book you wrote, right? Your big bestseller?

DAVID
Yeah. But what the hell -- ?

TRAXLER
Let me just read a small section --
I've been listening to you patiently --
(reading)
"In the near future American cities will soon start suffering massive blackouts because of our drug-like dependence on "let's-get-high-technology" and military science fiction hardware".
(handing the book back)
You wrote that, didn't you Dave?

DAVID
Yes. But --

TRAXLER
So, I'm thinking this is like the phony meltdown you created at that power plant. A demonstration of some kind. Only working on a larger canvas.

DAVID
You think I caused this? Traxler, you chode! I said when we cracked open the --

TRAXLER
What's your "eco-terrorist agenda" this time?

At DOD, the assistant returns and Traxler covers the phone.

ASSISTANT
The call's coming over a police emergency line from Berkeley.

TRAXLER
Tell the cops what's going down -- and to grab Lightman.
(back onto the phone)
Okay, Dave -- you want to get your message out -- what if I can get you on TV? How's that sound? You can talk all about the blackout and --

DAVID
Damn it, Traxler, don't you get it?
This is more than just a blackout!

EXT. BEHIND THE POLICE VAN - NIGHT

David angrily rips the wires off the phone. Jessie sees him crawl out from under the van. He shoves the module into his pocket, grabs Jessie's arm and pulls her after him.

DAVID
Come on, we're out of here. Just act natural, couple of tourists...

David and Jessie plow through the crowds in the streets.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Traxler was stalling so they could trace the call. They're going to be - oh shit - trying to find us!

Looking back, Jessie sees the commo squad examining the loose wires behind the police van. And several cops are already fanning out to search for them.

EXT. AN ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

As police sirens wail, David pulls Jessie into an alley. He stops and looks out cautiously --

JESSIE
David --

They see two cops coming from the other direction. Then David notices a couple of UC kids making out in the shadows -- and he pulls Jessie close --

DAVID
Pretend you're kissing me.

She's caught off guard -- and bursts out laughing.

JESSIE
That is the lamest -- sorry but I barf easily. I'd rather be arrested than --

DAVID
(pulling her away)
All of a sudden she's a comic...

He drags her around the corner and they disappear. The arriving cops find the UC couple kissing in the shadows.

COP
What do you two think -- we're the world's dumbest assholes?

The Berkeley cops grab the two startled kids and shove them face first against the wall.

COP (CONT'D)
We want to talk to you, Lightman.

INT. DOD OFFICES - A HALLWAY - NIGHT

Ed Traxler maneuvers down the dark hall with Griffin.

TRAXLER
I'm gonna nail this P-h-Fucking-Dweeb.
He'll be researching Deviant Sexuality
at San Quentin.

Traxler trips on an inter-office mail carton -- and launches it with his foot.

TRAXLER (CONT'D)
Goddamn it, when're they going to fix
the lights?

Turning a corner, Traxler sees three men approaching in a hurry.

DOD AGENT
A chopper just landed on the roof --

TRAXLER
With gas for the generators?

DOD AGENT
No, they came for you. They want you
at NORAD.

TRAXLER
NORAD?

DOD AGENT
This outage is spreading -- Seattle's
down, L.A.'s down, San Diego's fading.
They're worried that this is more
than just a blackout.

GRIFFIN
Sir -- isn't that what Lightman just
told you?

Traxler's shoots him a withering look.

CUT TO:

EXT. TRAVIS AIR FORCE BASE - DAWN

Helicopter lights flash and a ground crew waves in an Air Force Blackhawk helicopter. A legend comes up:

NORTH AMERICAN DEFENSE COMMAND
PACIFIC REGION (NORADPAC)

The chopper door opens and Ed Traxler squints against the rising sun as he climbs out.

INT. A NORADPAC HALLWAY - MORNING

The halls are teeming with military personnel. Traxler is escorted by young LIEUTENANT BECKMAN.

TRAXLER
Now I know who's got real status --
obviously no power problems here.

LT. BECKMAN
You spend 30 billion dollars on back-ups, you're ready for anything, sir.

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Ed Traxler slows as he enters the big room, awed as he is on each visit by the vast array of the world's most sophisticated air and space defense resources.

Top tech crews work in silhouette against the huge wall screens which display a stunning visual panoply of GPS, Fleet satellite communications, MILSTAR and meteorological data.

Traxler follows the lieutenant to a large conference table at which GENERAL FRANK NEVINS (55) is being briefed. Traxler joins a second rank of officers standing behind the primaries.

MAJOR FRANKLIN
Per DOD National Emergency Directive
we'll start monitoring all civilian
power grids, telephone systems and --

GENERAL NEVINS
No objections from the private sector?

COLONEL SOBEL
Negative. They're open to any help
they can get.

General Nevins and staff watch the large wall displays zero to black -- then re-light with new graphics.

MAJOR FRANKLIN
Alpha screen shows the entire U.S.
Electrical Grid.

GENERAL NEVINS
The West Coast is black.

COLONEL SOBEL
Yes sir, we've got power outages from
Washington state to the Mexican border.

GENERAL NEVINS
The flashing yellow -- ?

COLONEL SOBEL
Central and Midwestern Electrical
Grids which are in danger of --
(MORE)

COLONEL SOBEL (CONT'D)
(as he speaks another section darkens)
There goes Central now --

MAJOR FRANKLIN
Bravo shows telephone nexus terminals, and Charley screen is radio/television and microwave relay -- both showing massive failures.

ANOTHER MAJOR
Sir, on Delta you can see the Air Traffic Control transmission zones going down.

GENERAL NEVINS
Whatever this thing is -- it's marching east across the whole country, knocking out our entire civilian infrastructure.
(to an aide)
Get me Cheyenne Mountain then Washington.

As General Nevins moves to the phones, Colonel Sobel sees Traxler and waves him over.

COLONEL SOBEL
Ed, mobilize your CERT people.

TRAXLER
You think we need the "Electronic SWAT Team"?

COLONEL SOBEL
This looks like some kind of foreign or terrorist "Denial of Service" attack. And it's coming in electronically, most likely through computers.

Colonel Sobel starts to leave --

TRAXLER
Phil -- there's a guy named Lightman, professional whistle blower -- he's got a theory that this thing started when we blew up SALYUT.

COLONEL SOBEL
Meaning the Russians? Hell, the Russians can't even shoot spitwads because they're out of rubber bands.
(going off)
Something like this and every nut's got a conspiracy theory.

Traxler nods -- until he looks at the big screens and sees more lights dimming as more systems go down.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAVID LIGHTMAN'S HOUSE - MORNING

Storm clouds roll in from the Pacific. The trees are awash in wind as David and Jessie walk up the path. David detours around the side of the house to check for uninvited company.

JESSIE
There are lights on inside.

DAVID
It's a backup I rigged. Solar charged lithium-ion battery banks...

INT. DAVID'S LIVING ROOM - LATER

In front of a large TV, Jessie clicks through static-blitzed channels. David scans the dial of his stereo -- nothing.

DAVID
Christ, even the Emergency Broadcast network's down. Everything's gone.

INT. DAVID'S STUDY - LATER

David's at his computer, Jessie's in a chair next to him. He keys in commands and addresses, but the screen remains blank.

JESSIE
We're hitting a big gray wall.

DAVID
All hardwire connections are hosed. Satellite links crunched. WWW - dot - DOA. I've tried every back door, trap door, wormhole. But Mr Computer -- he dead.

David shuts off his machine and thinks a moment.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Welcome to my nightmare.

He looks out the tall windows at the developing storm.

DAVID (CONT'D)
You realize no foreign armies have fought a war on American soil in 200 years?

JESSIE
What? A war? What're you -- ?

DAVID
I think this is a war... Right now.
Only the field of combat this time is --
Cyber space.

David gets up and walks around the room.

DAVID (CONT'D)
How many computers do you think there
are in this country? How many millions
that run everything? We've happily
given up our lives and souls to them...

David looks at his work table, littered with old sketches, plans and scale models.

DAVID (CONT'D)
And I did my modest part -- to help
build the most technically advanced
information society in the world --
only it's a house of cards we built
right on the San Andreas fault. And
what somebody has done now to bring
it all down -- is to simply take over
our computers.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE: THE CYBER STORM

Inside a power plant, the deafening scream of the huge power turbines whines down as they lose power...

In an Arizona desert, a dozen spinning radar dishes slow to stop...

DAVID (V.O.)
I believe somebody is now in control
of our computers -- and they're
stripping us of our power, our light,
our information...

On a mountain top, electronic noises from microwave Towers of Babble diminish in volume and fall silent...

We see traffic jams on LA freeways, on the bridges of New Orleans, gridlock in the cement canyons of Manhattan...

DAVID (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They're blitzing our transportation
systems and stopping us dead in our
tracks.

Helmet lights flare as emergency crews try to evacuate people trapped in subways.

Helicopter footage: two cargo trains have collided, spilling cars like toys, and their noxious cargos are going up in pillars of fire...

DAVID (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They've injected Cyber-cyanide to euthanize our financial systems. So our credit cards are worthless, bank accounts are wiped out -- the guy on the street and the broker on Wall Street suddenly are facing a truly cashless society...

A desperate man loses it and starts kicking an inoperative ATM machine... windows are shattered by a mob outside a closed bank.

Light flares through the open doors of the deserted New York Stock Exchange, whose big electronic boards are dark.

DAVID (CONT'D)
And so without a shot fired, without a single casualty on their side, they've wreaked havoc and death -- and they're about to be the undisputed winners of the world's first Cyber War.

Inside an overwhelmed hospital, desperate ER crews work by flashlight, shoving aside useless life-support machines...

Out in the streets, cops in riot-gear attack once-civilized citizens who've become mobs of looters...

In an airport control tower, helpless air traffic controllers watch horrified as two passenger planes collide in the air and become mushrooming balls of flame...

CUT TO:

INT. THE LOBBY - RUSSIAN TRADE CENTER - DAY

Russian plainclothes security guards gaze through a half-block of tinted windows at a nearly silent tableau of traffic jams, police cars with flashing lights, and crowds of frightened people.

INT. 20TH FLOOR EXECUTIVE OFFICE - AT THAT MOMENT

Sergey Sherbo stands in an outer office with Dmitry and Viktor. They watch Marina Burova pacing irritably as she talks on the phone to a deserted hospital in Moscow --

MARINA BUROVA
General, you have to calm down.

INTERCUT: RYKOV IN HOSPITAL / MARINA AT RUSSIAN TRADE CENTER

Rykov stands silhouetted in a hallway, a bent figure in pajamas holding a phone and a butcher knife -- which he wields to keep his worried attendants at bay.

RYKOV
They've tortured me with electric-shock, shot me full of drugs -- I've been kept in chains for godsake!

MARINA BUROVA
They were afraid you might hurt yourself.

RYKOV
I'll kill anyone who touches me!

MARINA BUROVA
General, I promise we will get you out of there immediately.

RYKOV
Why wasn't I told about the module?!

MARINA BUROVA
... What are you talking about?

RYKOV
Sherbo just told me the module was stolen. Do you know how dangerous that is?

MARINA BUROVA
I thought it was only a small -- ?

RYKOV
Yes, a small detail -- but one of the most important details --

MARINA BUROVA
Why?

RYKOV
(rubbing his scarred head)
I try to remember everything -- everything that can hurt me -- because I have learned -- God is in the details.

MARINA BUROVA
I didn't know you'd become religious.

RYKOV
Don't mock me, you bitch!
(MORE)

RYKOV (CONT'D)
You emasculated your husband -- but you will listen to me. That module receives all of the command signals.

MARINA BUROVA
Why is that dangerous?

RYKOV
Because it could lead whoever has the module -- to the source of those signals.

Marina falls silent as she considers this. She looks to the outer office, and Sergey Sherbo knows there's trouble ahead.

MARINA BUROVA
We'll find it.

INT. TRADE CENTER UNDERGROUND GARAGE - DAY

The SPL van pulls up as Dmitry and Viktor exit the elevators. Sherbo gives orders to two Russian security guards in the van.

Viktor grabs Dmitry's arm, slowing him --

VIKTOR
I'm a scientist. I wasn't hired to do this.

DMITRY
How is your family, Viktor? You want to make sure they're safe at home?

Dmitry continues to the van and climbs in with the security guards. Viktor reluctantly follows suit.

CUT TO:

INT. DAVID'S STUDY - DAY

The small command module from SALYUT sits on David's work table. Rain lashes against the window behind it. And outside, we see two figures on a storm-swept hillside behind the house.

EXT. HILLSIDE BEHIND DAVID'S HOUSE

On the flooded slope, David and Jessie are battered by wind and rain as they try to free-up a large satellite dish. David loosens bolts on the turntable as Jessie unhooks the guy wires.

JESSIE
Aaahh!

She loses her footing and slips toward the cliff. David dives and grabs her by the neck of her raincoat.

DAVID
Shit -- El Niño is not helping!

Managing to stand, Jessie tries to help David shove the satellite dish as the rain continues to blast them.

DAVID (CONT'D)
We're screwed if we can't reposition
it!

JESSIE
Isn't it on a rotating -- ?

DAVID
Yes, but it wasn't meant to point at
the goddamn North Pole!

Finally, the dish breaks loose. They both stumble, slide, regain their balance.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Check the GPS.

Jessie pulls his handheld Garmin locator from her pocket.

JESSIE
Nothing. Dead.

DAVID
The satellites are blitzed. We'll
have to do it the old fashioned way.

David looks off at his pterodactyl sculpture hanging from the tree -- it's being buffeted by strong winds.

DAVID (CONT'D)
The prevailing wind's north northeast --

He squints up through the rain and spots the weakly glowing sun behind the racing clouds.

DAVID (CONT'D)
What time is it?

JESSIE
Eight twenty.

DAVID
So if the sun's at fifty degrees --
we've got to move this --

David shoulders the dish, and Jessie helps push, turning it slowly to a new position.

DAVID (CONT'D)
More, more, there.

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

A back door bursts open and Jessie and David charge inside. He slams the door. Soaked to the bone, they catch their breath. Jessie jumps as a flash of lightning supercharges the sky.

Pulling a towel from a cabinet, David wraps it around her.

DAVID
You've got to dry off, you're shivering.

JESSIE
It's not the rain.
(seeing his look)
I'm scared. Okay?

DAVID
No problem. So am I.

She leans back against the wall and tries to calm down.

JESSIE
I mean I see why you're a good teacher. Your lecture on the electronic apocalypse -- worked for me -- I'm terrified, professor.

DAVID
I'm sorry. And sorry I dragged you into this.

He lifts the towel and gently wipes some rain from her face. Jessie's surprised by his tenderness.

JESSIE
It's not your fault. You've been trying -- I've just been complaining -- about stuff that's not important now.

David studies her a moment.

DAVID
Everything's important now.

David finds himself leaning toward her slowly -- and kissing her. Jessie's surprised, but not displeased.

JESSIE
Uh... Why did you do that?

DAVID
I don't know. Maybe because you've reminded me of something I've forgotten to factor in... for a long time now.

JESSIE
What's that?

DAVID
The human factor. The real reason why we can't give up. Not now.

He looks at her -- and she wipes some rain from his face. Then he starts for the study, and Jessie watches him go.

INT. DAVID'S STUDY

David turns on his computer. As he keys in commands, Jessie comes up behind him.

DAVID
So we got the dish aiming north. Now I'm hoping we can do some satellite dancing -- and see if the whole world's collapsed.

Jessie rolls a chair next to his.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(keying in commands)
Shit, our NOAA's out, no more US weather satellites operating...

JESSIE
If this _is_ some kind of Cyber War -- you really think it was started by this Rykov Protocol -- ?

DAVID
(keying in commands)
All I know is the message that came over the module said _Rykov_ Protocol. Let's try Japan's H-2 satellite --
(keying more)
And the data you caught the Russians downloading mentioned a General _Rykov_ -- so maybe if we can find out who the man is... But first we have to get back to that Russian site -- damn, Japan's bird's too far over the horizon.

JESSIE
Try the Chinese satellite -- the old FY-1. Their first polar orbiter.

DAVID
Yeah -- very good idea. It used to link to the Russian Meteor II program -- and might give us a back door into Moscow Air Defense --

He keys in commands and the screen comes alive.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Yes, way to go Mayday! We're baaacck.

They see a mass of information in Russian --

JESSIE
Try to access the Russian archives.

DAVID
Shit, it's all Cyrillic to me.

He rolls aside in his chair, and Jessie scoots hers to the computer and starts keying --

They wait. The screen changes. And Jessie reads transfixed as she scrolls through a report.

DAVID (CONT'D)
You found Rykov?

JESSIE
He's like a legend...

DAVID
What's it say?

JESSIE
Loosely translated: General Anton Rykov was head of Soviet Air Defense. And years ago he put a thousand Russian scientists to work developing what he modestly named the "Rykov Protocol" --

DAVID
There we go -- so what was it?

JESSIE
(reading more)
The protocol was also known as Rykov's "Doomsday Machine".

DAVID
I hate heavy metal groups.

Jessie translates more --

JESSIE
General Rykov planned for Russia to set up a system of automated vengeance, so if World War III was fought and the Americans won -- even if all Soviet forces were wiped out, the Rykov Protocol would still retaliate -- and destroy us.

DAVID
Guy's a bad sport. And he built this "Doomsday Machine"?

JESSIE
No, according to this, even the old Kremlin bosses realized how dangerous it was -- and ordered him to abandon the project.

DAVID
But did he?

JESSIE
This says General Rykov resigned in protest and was found dead shortly after -- he'd shot himself. At least that was the report from his second-in-command -- oh my god, listen to this -- Colonel Leonid Burova.

DAVID
Burova? The Russian President? Jesus, he worked for Rykov. He knew about the --

Suddenly, there's a loud BEEPING noise and Jessie jumps again. David's out of his chair and checks the computer --

JESSIE
Your battery banks going?

DAVID
No -- they're still -- wait --

He goes to the work table. Jessie looks fearful as they approach -- the module.

The module's emitting the same high pitched tones. And they hear an electronic Russian voice. David looks at Jessie --

DAVID (CONT'D)
What?

JESSIE
(translating)
Something about the "Protocol" again.

DAVID
Damn it, there isn't supposed to be one!

JESSIE
Then why -- why is it saying "Phase Two" is starting?

This is not good news. But it grows worse when they hear a low rolling thunder and look out the large windows --

The rain is abating and the dark swirling clouds are breaking to reveal gray sky -- and **three large black bombers** flying over.

CUT TO:

EXT. PARK SERVICE TOWER - WASHINGTON CASCADES - DAY

A ranger scans the forest for smoke. Then he hears rolling thunder and tilts his binoculars higher -- and spots **three more black bombers** looming against the pale sky...

EXT. GLEN CANYON DAM - ARIZONA - DAY

A thousand miles away, emergency crews work above the roaring water spewing out of the damn. They hear another rumbling --

And see **four bombers** coming in low over the damn. The men dive for the cement as the huge jets scream directly overhead...

INT. A POLICE HELICOPTER - NEW ORLEANS - DAY

Smoke wafts from fires burning below. A police sergeant shouts to the chopper pilot --

POLICE SERGEANT
The city's burning -- every fire company's out of water!

The pilot points. The cop looks shocked to see **five black planes** in formation thundering over the city. The chopper pilot dives the helicopter as the black jets scream past...

CUT TO:

INT. NORADPAC - A HALLWAY - DAY

Traxler runs down a hall with Lieutenant Beckman.

INT. NORADPAC - UNDERGROUND COMMO CENTER

They enter the "Engine Room" communications center where they find the CERT TEAM checking rows of mainframe DOD computers.

CERT ADVISOR
(to Traxler)
We've got an epidemic here. Military systems have been hit by the same virus that destroyed the civilian infrastructure.

TRAXLER
(to Lt. Beckman)
You can kiss goodbye to your 30 billion in backups.

LT. BECKMAN
It's impossible. These systems can't fail --
(looking around)
And everything's still up -- the computers are alive.

CERT ADVISOR
Only we're not in control of them anymore -- the virus is. It's giving the orders now -- all we can do is wait to see what happens next.

Suddenly the computer screen nearby goes berserk: morphing into an ugly strobing lightstorm. As Traxler looks around the room, the camera rises and shows more screens being blitzed and flashing chaotically...

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - LATER - DAY

General Nevins stands at the conference table and listens in disbelief to the CERT team's report

CERT ADVISOR
The computers won't show us ground based radar. And Milstar satellite surveillance was cut off. We're being denied access to our own intelligence.

Major Franklin arrives to expand the bleak scenario --

MAJOR FRANKLIN
Uplinks are out with Peterson Air Force Base, Falcon Air Force Base, and Cheyenne Mountain just went silent.

GENERAL NEVINS
What does the Pentagon -- ?

MAJOR FRANKLIN
We've lost contact with Washington -- including the Commander-in-Chief.

There's a silence around the table.

TRAXLER
We're standing here in the middle of an electronic Pearl Harbor. We can't see it, or hear it, but we're getting the shit kicked out of us.

GENERAL NEVINS
If we're no longer able to provide the surveillance of our national airspace -- we're vulnerable -- to anything.

An out-of-breath COMMO SERGEANT reports to Maj. Franklin.

COMMO SERGEANT
Sir, we've got reports of unidentified aircraft.

MAJOR FRANKLIN
No IDs?

COMMO SERGEANT
These weren't spotted by military radar -- they were civilian sightings coming through amateur radio operators.

TRAXLER
Ham radio? That's our Early Warning System now? Watch the sky, folks -- because your Air Force is in the shithouse?

MAJOR FRANKLIN
We're attempting to get aircraft scrambling from McClellan.

General Nevins looks at the huge wall screens which are in "blue standby mode".

GENERAL NEVINS
Try the geo-grids again.

The order's passed, and they watch the large wall screens burst into the same blinding light show that the computer screens are displaying...

And then the screens suddenly go dark.

GENERAL NEVINS (CONT'D)
So now we're sitting here like moles waiting for the exterminator.

CUT TO:

INT. DAVID'S HOUSE - DAY

David grabs his coat. Jessie's putting on her jacket.

DAVID
What if Rykov secretly put his Protocol into operation?
(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)
And it's been waiting, hidden and
forgotten all these years. Until we
blew up the space station --

JESSIE
And accidentally triggered -- this
insane Doomsday Machine he designed
to destroy us.

DAVID
Time to come in out of the cold --
and find Traxler.

David grabs the module and pockets it. Then he starts for the front door, where Jessie's waiting --

JESSIE
(frightened)
David, there's somebody coming.

He pulls her back from the window. They look out cautiously and see two men emerging through the trees -- Dmitry and Viktor.

DAVID
Your Russian fans.

He pulls Jessie toward the back of the house.

INT. THE KITCHEN

They arrive at the back door, but David hesitates.

JESSIE
What's wrong?

Through the window, David sees two more men (Russian security guards from the Trade Center) coming around the back.

INT. THE BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

The door flies open and Jessie starts down the steps. David quickly locks the door behind them and follows her

Jessie sees the storage batteries and generators that power David's house. But David's more concerned with the footsteps he hears above them.

DAVID
They're in the house.

INT. UPSTAIRS - AT THAT MOMENT

Dmitry ransacks the study as he searches for the module. Viktor looks down a hall -- and is shocked when he sees the two Russian security agents draw guns as they hunt for David and Jessie.

INT. THE BASEMENT - A TREATMENT TUNNEL

A door opens -- David steps in, grabs a utility light, pulls Jessie in, closes and locks the door.

David aims the light, and they start down a narrow concrete corridor whose walls have water cascading down them. The corridor opens into a 20x20' room housing a pool of liquid.

David steps into it, and Jessie realizes it's only a foot deep.

DAVID
Come on.

JESSIE
What's this?

DAVID
Sort of an experiment.

JESSIE
What kind?

Jessie steps into the liquid --

DAVID
Waste Treatment System.

Jessie retracts her foot in a flash --

JESSIE
Waste what? Oh Christ! What's in here?!

DAVID
Nothing -- if it's working.

He pulls her after him as they slosh across the shallow pool.

DAVID (CONT'D)
By this point the heavy stuff should be almost filtered out.

JESSIE
(grimacing)
Heavy stuff? Almost?

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE - DAY

The rain has stopped. In a field behind the house there's a utility shed. A metal trap door opens beside it, and David pops up and looks around. Jessie emerges cautiously.

DAVID
We can cut through the trees and get to the car.

As David closes the door -- a GUNSHOT rings out. The bullet ricochets off the door. David and Jessie dive for cover, then scramble through the high weeds toward the trees.

They jump over a fallen tree and take cover behind rocks. Jessie is terrified. David sees the two Russian security guards moving through the field toward the utility house.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(looking around)
Okay, so we take a short detour --
and hope El Niño's done his thing.

He pulls her with him as he ducks through the oak trees and starts up a ravine.

EXT. DAVID'S HOUSE - AT THAT MOMENT

Hearing the gunshots, Viktor rushes out of the house. He looks shocked and shouts when Dmitry appears in the doorway --

VIKTOR
They're trying to kill them! We can't
let them do that --

Viktor starts running toward the field.

DMITRY
We're not done here. We haven't got
the module!

VIKTOR
(as he goes)
Fuck Marina Burova!

DMITRY
(quietly)
No, Viktor -- you don't want to do
that...

Dmitry reaches into his jacket and pulls out a Czech CZ pistol.

Viktor is passing through the gate when a 9mm bullet rips through his back and helps him on his way...

CUT TO:

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - DAY

General Nevins follows Major Franklin and Colonel Sobel past the large wall-screens, which remain blank.

COLONEL SOBEL
We're battling our own computers.
Every move we make, they countermand
it.

MAJOR FRANKLIN
But we managed to put four Falcons up from McClellan -- and we've patched together some short-wave audio --

General Nevins watches in disbelief as technicians with grease pencils mark aerial locations on a plastic map board.

GENERAL NEVINS
We're back in World War Two watching goddamn chalk marks on a blackboard.

The room echoes with tense air chatter over loudspeakers --

FIGHTER PILOT (O.S.)
(over speakers)
"This is Falcon Lead to Falcon Base. I'm two point eight miles away from four ID-X heavy bandits."

GENERAL NEVINS
Demand identification.

EXT. THE SKY ABOVE CALIFORNIA - DAY

Two American F-16 Falcon jet fighters scream past. They bank and approach four dark, unmarked attack bombers.

FIGHTER PILOT (O.S.)
(over radio)
"You have entered U.S. air space. Identify yourself immediately."

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - AT THAT MOMENT

Traxler flips through an old manual --

TRAXLER
Sounds like your pilots are tailing Soviet-built SU-100 Sotka bombers.

GENERAL NEVINS
What are they?

TRAXLER
(reading the notebook)
High-speed, four-engine, double delta wing -- but the strange thing is --

GENERAL NEVINS
Is what?

TRAXLER
The Russians supposedly only built one of these bombers -- back in the seventies...

GENERAL NEVINS
(to the floor commander)
Keep demanding identification.

CUT TO:

EXT. A RAVINE - DAY

David and Jessie run through trees and up a narrow ravine.

Behind them, the Russian security agents crash through scrub, until one catches a glimpse of David and Jessie and lifts his Star Firestar 45 caliber --

Gunfire echoes as David and Jessie clamber up a muddy slope.

JESSIE
(breathless)
Where are we going?!

DAVID
Up there --

Against the cloud-swirling sky she sees a stone outcropping that looks like a miniature fortress. David pushes her and they scramble to the top.

The camera rises to reveal a storage tank above the ravine. Rain water overflows the sides and the tank is ready to burst.

DAVID (CONT'D)
My water storage system. In case of severe drought --

JESSIE
Not exactly our current problem.
What are you doing?

DAVID
I'm about to lose Moscow's A-team.

She sees him rip open a control panel and push a switch.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Oh shit. The electrical's out up here...

More gunshots explode, clanging against the tank. David yanks Jessie behind the pump housing. As he does, the module spills out of his pocket and slips down the hill.

They see the module land fifteen feet away -- and the gunman coming up the hill. David starts to move and Jessie grabs him --

JESSIE
No -- just leave it!

DAVID
Stay here.

Jessie looks terrified as David slides down the slope and more gunshots send up geysers of mud around him.

The gunman claw their way up the hill, getting closer. Finally, as David grabs the module, he spots something else. He rolls and kicks out -- his foot slams into a manual release lever.

When the floodgate springs open, a surging torrent of pent-up water explodes out of the tank and cascades down the ravine.

The two Russian gunmen scrambling up suddenly see **a ten-foot-high wall of water** crashing down on them.

Inside the flash flood: the two men are hit and enveloped in muddy water, trapped and tumbling helplessly as the roaring tide crashes down the ravine, spewing muddy debris in its wake.

David and Jessie watch the raging flood carrying the gunmen down through the oak trees.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE SKY ABOVE CALIFORNIA - DAY

Thin clouds flash past as the two F-16s shadow the four hulking Soviet SU-100s. Pulling abreast of the lead bomber, the American pilot signals from his cockpit -- but can see nothing through the black windows of the bomber.

FIGHER PILOT (V.O.)
"Negative. No talk back, response to hand signals, and no visible flight crew."

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The General and his staff watch the plastic tracking board and the locator "Xs" being constantly redrawn.

COLONEL SOBEL
Maybe they're drones -- without crews.

FIGHTER PILOT (O.S.)
(over speakers)
"Falcon Lead steady -- at six thousand feet and approaching Sacramento."

LT. BECKMAN
Sir, we've got reports now of a total of a dozen intruders -- coming in from the Atlantic, Pacific and Gulf coasts.

Traxler reads again from the DOD plane list --

TRAXLER
This says the Sotka bomber can be
flown with an electronic surveillance
package -- or a nuclear payload.

GENERAL NEVINS
(after a moment)
If they don't respond in thirty seconds --
give Falcon Leader permission to fire.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.)
(transmitting)
"This is Falcon Base. Mark thirty
seconds to target lock-in, Falcon
Lead."

FIGHTER PILOT (O.S.)
(over radio)
"Prepare to lock in. Copy out."

CUT TO:

EXT. THE BERKELEY HILLS - DAY

David and Jessie run along a dirt road, then stumble down an embankment to a paved street. Heading around a curve they see Jessie's Wagoneer parked ahead.

INT. THE WAGONEER

They climb in the car, too exhausted to talk. David starts the engine -- suddenly Jessie screams. Dmitry's at the window next to David. He shoves his pistol against David's head.

DMITRY
The module.

Seeing David hesitate, Jessie pulls the module from his pocket. Dmitry grabs it, backs away and raises the pistol. David and Jessie expect to die -- but Dmitry sees something else.

EXT. THE WAGONEER AND STREET

The SPL van skids around the curve. Dmitry sees it coming directly at him -- Viktor behind the wheel. Dmitry shoots -- the windshield shatters, but the van hurtles at him.

INT. THE WAGONEER

David and Jessie see Dmitry's body fly airborne, then fall onto the street and roll. The van crashes into a parked car.

EXT. THE STREET

David and Jessie jump out and approach the van. Viktor shoves the door open, and David catches him. Jessie sees blood covering Viktor's back as he's laid on the ground.

Viktor struggles to say something in Russian. Jessie answers -- but he just stares back blankly. David feels the Russian's neck and finds no pulse.

DAVID
What'd he say?

JESSIE
Marina Burova. She's the only one who can stop this now.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE AIR ABOVE CALIFORNIA - DAY

The American fighters continue their pursuit of the bombers.

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - AT THAT MOMENT

General Nevins nods to a radio operator.

GENERAL NEVINS
Go to green.

GROUND CONTROL
(into radio mike)
You will go to green, Lead. Go to green. Authentication Zulu Golf Zulu.

INT. THE F-16

The fighter rolls into a vertical descent behind the Sotka, and locks on its missile. A buzzer sounds and the pilot sees the target display flashing on his windshield read-out.

FIGHTER PILOT
(over radio)
Falcon Lead, on green, locked in and initiating.

GROUND CONTROL (O.S.)
(over radio)
"You are good to go, Lead."

Looking apprehensive, the pilot squeezes his trigger.

EXT. THE AIR ABOVE CALIFORNIA

An AMRAAM missile streaks away from the F-16 Falcon. It screams through the air and heads directly into an exhaust on the lead Russian Sotka. The missile seems to disappear for an instant --

Then there is a flash as the Russian bomber is pulverized in a ROILING EXPLOSION of flames.

The other Russian bombers plow through the flames and debris -- and then slowly bank into wide turns.

INT. THE F-16

The pilot watches the smoky sky as he banks upward.

FIGHTER PILOT
"Hard kill. Target destroyed. No chutes deployed. Three remaining bogies are changing course..."

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - DAY

There's a silence in the big room.

FIGHTER PILOT (OVER RADIO)
"They're heading back out to sea."

GENERAL NEVINS
They didn't fire back. No land strikes.

LT. BECKMAN
(reporting)
General, we're hearing from the East Coast and Gulf that the other two bandit groups are also headed back out to sea -- and running low on fuel.

EXT. THE GULF COAST - DAY

The southern squadron of Sotka bombers heads into the Gulf. One is losing altitude and slowly noses into the sea, sending up an eruption of water and exploding pieces of metal.

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - DAY

The others are silent as General Nevins listens to reports.

TRAXLER
They're leaving. What the hell kind of invasion was this?

GENERAL NEVINS
Chum.

MAJOR FRANKLIN
Sir?

GENERAL NEVINS
The bait you throw out when you're fishing.

TRAXLER
Fishing for what?

GENERAL NEVINS
Our weaknesses. Before a battle, the Roman legions would send in unarmed soldiers to be slaughtered -- just to reveal their enemies strength. This was a test like that -- to see how much we could put in the air, how badly damaged we are by this cyber war.

TRAXLER
So if this was a test -- what in god's name is coming at us next?

CUT TO:

EXT. THE GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE - **AERIAL SHOT** - DAY

From the air, we see traffic stalled on the bridge as lines of cars inch out of the city, all lanes heading north. No cars are entering San Francisco.

As the camera swoops down, we pick up a small ferry plowing through the choppy waters. It appears to be empty, until we descend enough to see one car -- a Wagoneer on its deck.

EXT. THE FERRY - DAY

David pours two cups of coffee out of a thermos in the cabin. He steps out and passes the ferry CAPTAIN at the rail.

DAVID
Afraid that's the last of the coffee.

CAPTAIN
It's runnin' out of gas that's ruining my day. This'll be my final crossing. I didn't expect any passengers going this direction.

DAVID
(looking at the bridge)
Everybody's trying to get out of the city.

CAPTAIN
Hell, you'd think it was the end of the world.

David just nods and walks back to Jessie, who's standing by the car. She takes the coffee and looks out at the city.

JESSIE
Can we stop this? The truth.

DAVID
(trying to make light)
Well -- what else would you have been doing today?

JESSIE
All of a sudden... I don't know if I can handle this.

DAVID
You're doing fine.

JESSIE
You're not big on reassurance. I thought you had a way with words -- convince me we have a future.

He sees that she's serious.

DAVID
I've spent too much of my life predicting the future -- and letting "the now" get away from me.
(studying her)
But okay, if this -- little glitch hadn't interrupted us -- I guess the first thing I would've done was invite you up to Mendocino.

JESSIE
And why would I have gone with you?

DAVID
To stay at this inn there -- where we would've watched the whales go by. And each morning when we woke up, we would've found a little basket of breakfast sitting by our door.

JESSIE
Does that usually work with women?

DAVID
(smiling faintly)
I don't know.
(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)
I was only there once -- alone -- to give a lecture on "Sludge As a Sustainable Energy Source".

Jessie looks toward the city they're approaching.

JESSIE
Okay, let's say I had gone up there with you. Then what would've happened?

DAVID
I guess after a respectable dating period, my next strategy would've been to get you to -- move in.

JESSIE
For a sleep-over? Or as a permanent intruder in your perfect house?

DAVID
I thought you liked my house?

JESSIE
Everything but the recycled beer bottle floors -- they're a little cold. I guess I could've brought my kilim rugs with me. To warm the place up...

She looks at him -- and they kiss -- a hungry, bittersweet hint of what might have been. Then they stand with their arms around each other and survey the empty city.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Just my luck -- the first guy I've wanted to move in with asks me to do it -- on Doomsday.
(after a moment)
Make me a promise that whatever happens next we'll go through it together.

DAVID
I'm not going to leave you, Jessie -- ever.

JESSIE
Ever might be too short now...

CUT TO:

INT. BOLTUNOV CLINIC - MOSCOW - NIGHT

General Rykov stands in an mangey robe, his one good eye surveying the maps he's pasted to the walls. He holds a phone --

GENERAL RYKOV
I will be Minister of Defense -- your husband promised me that.

INTERCUT: RYKOV AT CLINIC / MARINA BUROVA AT TRADE CENTER

In the office overlooking San Francisco, Sherbo sees that Marina Burova is irritated by the old man.

MARINA BUROVA
Yes. And you are sure Phase Three of the protocol will terminate in three hours?

GENERAL RYKOV
Are you worried about getting home, Marina? It will work. You found the module?

MARINA BUROVA
(eyeing Sherbo)
That is being taken care of.

In her office, Marina hangs up the phone --

MARINA BUROVA (CONT'D)
My husband is still sentimental about his old commander -- but Rykov's usefulness is over. And now he knows too much.
(hands the phone to Sherbo)
Tell Nazarenko to find a quiet spot in the woods -- and to bury the General there -- with the full honors he deserves.

Even Sherbo seems surprised by Marina's cold ruthlessness. She starts packing her briefcase.

MARINA BUROVA (CONT'D)
And where is the module, Sherbo?

SHERBO
I'm waiting to hear from Dmitry.

MARINA BUROVA
Remember, I am holding you personally responsible.

Sherbo nods bleakly and leaves the room.

INT. THE BOLTUNOV CLINIC - GENERAL RYKOV'S ROOM - NIGHT

General Rykov turns as two Russian bodyguards enter. One man hangs Rykov's old uniform on a wardrobe. They watch as the general walks to his garish, medal-adorned uniform.

Rykov touches the battle ribbons fondly, and there are tears in his eyes as he removes the jacket from the hanger.

INT. RUSSIAN TRADE CENTER - MARINA'S OFFICES - DAY

Marina Burova comes out of her office and finds Sherbo on the satellite phone. He looks pale.

SHERBO
I can't locate Dmitry and Viktor.
The two security men with them haven't
returned either.

MARINA BUROVA
So they didn't find the module? You
idiot. This is your fault.

She glares at him. Sherbo looks relieved when they hear a roaring noise and through the windows see a helicopter arriving.

SHERBO
It will be all right. Nothing can
stop it now -- and we'll be at the
airport in ten minutes.

MARINA BUROVA
(eyeing him coldly)
Pack the files. And bring the phone.

EXT. THE ROOF OF THE BUILDING - DAY

As the helicopter lands, a roof access door opens and Marina Burova appears. She shuts the door, and notices a padlock hanging on a hasp. She inserts the padlock -- locking the door. Then she ducks toward the helicopter.

INT. THE STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER

Panting as he hurries up the steps, Sherbo carries a briefcase and the satellite phone in an aluminum case. He gets to the top step and reaches for the doorknob --

The door is locked. Sherbo pushes it. He can hear the helicopter's engines rising in volume outside on the rooftop.

Sherbo tries to force the door with his shoulder. As the helicopter's scream increases, so does Sherbo's desperation. He shouts and starts pounding on the door.

EXT. THE ROOF OF THE BUILDING - AT THAT MOMENT

The helicopter lifts off. We see Marina Burova in the window, then the helicopter rises into the sky and banks toward the sun.

INT. THE STAIRWELL

Sherbo is hoarse and weak from pounding on the door. Looking like a condemned man, he turns -- and sees something below.

David Lightman waits at the bottom of the steps. And he holds the late Dmitry Gudin's 9mm pistol.

DAVID
You miss your ride, Sergey?

CUT TO:

EXT. HIGHWAY 380 - DAY

Jessie's Wagoneer speeds south toward the airport.

INT. THE WAGONEER

Jessie sits in back with the pistol. David's behind the wheel. And Sergey Sherbo sits muttering like a "dead man talking".

SHERBO
It's too late. We're all dead. Marina is at the airport. The plane is landing -- to take her back to Moscow.

DAVID
Right before this Doomsday Machine destroys us.

JESSIE
Are Marina and her husband insane?

SHERBO
Leonid Burova is fighting for his political life. He blames your country. And Marina's convinced him he can be the President of a new Russia -- that is no longer a crippled giant the world pities.

DAVID
You mean the world will pity America -- after Rykov's protocol wipes us out.

SHERBO
Marina said we are just -- how do you Americans put it -- leveling the playing field.

DAVID
What's going to happen Sherbo? What's coming at us?

SHERBO
I don't know. I swear. I was told -- it will just be a terrible accident, caused by a crazy old General in a mental hospital.

Traffic is slowing ahead.

JESSIE
There's the private charter terminal. But they've closed off the airport.

SHERBO
We're not going to make it.

DAVID
You Russians are always so gloomy.

EXT. THE HIGHWAY - DAY

David swerves the Wagoneer onto the shoulder of the highway, noses down an embankment and bounces across a field.

INT. THE WAGONEER

Sherbo grabs hold as the car smashes through a chain link fence, and David accelerates down a service road toward the airport.

INT. CHARTER JET TERMINAL - DAY

Marina Burova berates the harassed airport officials.

MARINA BUROVA
Why isn't my plane allowed to land?

OFFICIAL
Mrs Burova, because of the crisis, this airport's been ordered closed to everything but emergency --

MARINA BUROVA
This is an emergency. I have to get back to my country.

Another official appears and glares at her.

SENIOR OFFICIAL
I think you'll get your chance. Your plane's landing -- without permission.

They look out the windows. Marina smiles faintly as she leaves.

MARINA BUROVA
Thank you for your help. And have a nice day.

EXT. THE RUNWAY - AT THAT MOMENT

A Russian Tupolev commercial jet touches down.

EXT. THE CHARTER JET TERMINAL

Marina hurries to her limo. She opens the door and sees Sergey Sherbo inside. This startles Marina -- so does the gun David Lightman holds -- so does Jessie coming up behind her.

JESSIE
Get in Mrs Burova.
(as Marina hesitates)
I forget how you say "don't fuck with me" in Russian.

INT. THE LIMOUSINE - DAY

Marina gets in, and Jessie follows, sitting down next to David, who's now facing Marina and Sherbo with the gun.

DAVID
Mrs Burova -- we don't have much time. So either "A": you tell me how we stop this Doomsday Machine -- or "B": you're going to be as dead as a Chernobyl chicken.

Marina hears the Russian jet whining and sees her plane stopping out on the field.

MARINA BUROVA
Stop it? I can't stop it. My plane is here. I'll take you with me. But we have to go right now.

DAVID
No. Only one of us is going.
(then to Sherbo)
Get out of the car.

SHERBO
What?

DAVID
Get out of the car and get on the plane and tell them that Mrs Burova has decided that she's not going -- and they can take off without her.

Sherbo can't believe his luck. He looks at Marina and smiles faintly. Then Sherbo opens the door and gets out.

MARINA BUROVA
(shouting at Sherbo)
No! Tell them they can't leave me! Sherbo! I'll give you anything!

But Sherbo runs across the tarmac toward the distant jet.

MARINA BUROVA (CONT'D)
(glaring at David)
We're all going to be killed.

DAVID
Not if General Rykov stops it. Call him.

David opens the Sherbo's Halliburton case and pulls out the Russian satellite phone. He hands it to Marina.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Sherbo says the general listens to you. Make him stop this thing.

Marina sees Sherbo run up the steps to the jet -- and disappear inside with a crew member. She auto-dials the phone.

MARINA BUROVA
(on the phone)
Hello? Nazarenko? I have to talk to the general.
(listening in shock)
You what?! You idiot! No!

EXT. THE WOODS BEHIND THE BOLTUNOV CLINIC - NIGHT

Bodyguards with flashlights escort General Rykov, dressed in his uniform, down a dark muddy road.

MAN
This will do. Stop here.

The old General stops and looks around.

GENERAL RYKOV
I don't understand. Where's my car? You said my new staff officers were coming to take me to Moscow?

The bodyguards swing their Uzis off of their shoulders.

GENERAL RYKOV (CONT'D)
What -- is there some danger?

The men back away from the general, who looks confused as they raise their guns --

NAZARENKO (O.S.)
No! No! Don't do it!

Seeing Nazarenko running up, the men lower their weapons. Nazarenko catches his breath as he hands the phone to Rykov.

GENERAL RYKOV
(on the phone)
This is -- General Rykov.

INTERCUT: MARINA IN LIMOUSINE / GENERAL RYKOV IN WOODS

Marina holds the phone and watches the jet in the distance.

MARINA BUROVA
General, listen to me --

RYKOV
No. Something is wrong. I don't like what is happening here.

MARINA BUROVA
What is happening there?! What about what is happening here?!

In the limo, they hear Rykov over the speakerphone. Marina is sweating as she watches the ground crew finish refueling the Russian jet.

MARINA BUROVA (CONT'D)
General, you have to stop the Protocol now, before Phase Three begins --

General Rykov stands with Leonid Burova's thugs in the dark woods. He rubs his head as if he's in pain.

GENERAL RYKOV
I don't understand. Why? We are so close to winning. Why would you want me to stop it?

MARINA BUROVA
I don't have time to explain. Just stop it!

GENERAL RYKOV
This makes no sense.
(eyeing the thugs)
And I don't trust these men here. What are they up to?

In the limo, Marina watches the ground crew pulling the stairs away from the Russian jet now.

MARINA BUROVA
Shut up you old fool and do what I'm telling you! Stop the --

GENERAL RYKOV
(stunned)
What did you call me? You can't talk to me like that.

The General stands in the dark woods and shakes his head.

GENERAL RYKOV (CONT'D)
I have never trusted you. I see how you manipulate your husband -- now you are trying to get rid of me. Because you have gone over to the Americans. You have made some kind of deal with the enemy --

In the limousine, David looks at Jessie.

DAVID
Paranoia. That Cold War classic.

MARINA BUROVA
General, I am ordering you to stop the --

GENERAL RYKOV
(in a sudden rage)
No! You do not give me orders! I have been laughed at and tortured, but I will not be deceived! You are not the president, and these men are not here to protect me. Trust is a weakness -- suspicion keeps you strong!

MARINA BUROVA
(changing tact suddenly)
General -- I am truly sorry. And I am begging you now.

GENERAL RYKOV
Go ahead, beg, traitor. But I hid the master control for the Protocol, so even if I wanted to -- I cannot stop it.

DAVID
Where did he hide it?

MARINA BUROVA
General you hid the control -- where?

GENERAL RYKOV
I will tell you, Marina, because you can never find it. The control is there -- in America.

DAVID
What the hell does he mean?

MARINA BUROVA
General, tell me the location. Where's the master control?

GENERAL RYKOV
It will never be found -- because it is hidden like a cancer deep inside America's own Strategic Defense System.

MARINA BUROVA
General, where?! Tell me -- Please! Don't let me die here!

The General sneers and hands the phone back to Nazarenko.

GENERAL RYKOV
This pitiful woman -- I can't listen to her whining anymore.

Nazarenko lifts the phone and hears Marina freaking out. General Rykov straightens up, and walks with dignity back toward the dark hospital.

INT. THE LIMOUSINE - DAY

Marina Burova hears the Russian jet's engines whine as it prepares to move. She dials the phone desperately --

MARINA BUROVA
My husband. He'll tell the General to stop it --
(as she connects)
Hello, this is Marina, let me talk to Leonid... now!...
(waiting)
Leonid, I'm in trouble. Don't let the plane take off. You've got to call General Rykov!

INT. KREMLIN - OFFICE OF THE RUSSIAN PRESIDENT - NIGHT

Leonid Burova sits in a leather chair listening to his wife's desperate pleas over the phone --

MARINA BUROVA (OVER TELEPHONE)
"He has to stop the Protocol. You must hurry or I am going to die here!

PRESIDENT BUROVA
Marinushka, you always tell me to calm down and think. Now you calm down. I understand your problem. Don't you worry, I can take care of it. You will soon be on your way, Marinushka...

Leonid Burova hangs up the phone. He peers out the window a moment as his advisors await his orders.

PRESIDENT BUROVA (CONT'D)
Have the plane take off.

INT. THE LIMOUSINE - AT THAT MOMENT

Marina Burova hangs up and looks relieved.

MARINA BUROVA
My husband will see to it that -- NO!!

Marina jumps to the limo window -- and sees the plane taxiing.

MARINA BUROVA (CONT'D)
Why are they -- ? He was supposed to -- oh no -- the bastard! He told them to leave without me! He's killing me!
(eyeing David's gun)
I'm getting out -- you wont' shoot me!

DAVID
I won't have to.

Lunging for the handle, Marina shoves the door open, jumps out and starts shouting at the taxiing jet.

EXT. THE LIMOUSINE

David and Jessie exit the limo. Marina realizes she can't reach the jet in time and jumps back in behind the wheel.

Carrying the phone case, David runs with Jessie to the Wagoneer.

DAVID
I'll drive, you call.

JESSIE
Where -- who?

DAVID
Berkeley -- tell them we're on the way. Then call Traxler -- we've got proof now. Marina herself.

INT. THE LIMOUSINE - AT THAT MOMENT

Marina turns the ignition key. The doors lock, but the engine doesn't start. Marina tries again -- nothing, it's dead.

Swearing, she reaches for the door handle -- but the door won't open -- and she can't unlock it. The power system is frozen.

Her jet is taxiing down the runway. Marina jumps across to open the passenger door -- but it, too, is locked. Screaming, she dives into the back of the limo and tries the other doors.

INT. THE WAGONEER - AT THAT MOMENT

As David accelerates out of the parking lot, he reaches into his pocket, pulls out a small chip and hands it to Jessie.

DAVID
Can't trust technology. One chip,
two crossed wires -- and Marina's
limo is her coffin.

EXT. THE LIMOUSINE - DAY

Marina screams inside the limousine. She pounds on the car windows as her jet roars over and rises into the sky -- stranding her, just as the cosmonaut was stranded aboard the SALYUT...

CUT TO:

INT. BERKELEY LABS - A HALLWAY - DAY

David, Jessie and Malvin run past students spilling gasoline into emergency generators.

MALVIN
They're doing what you asked and
setting up our generators.

The students start revving up the gas-powered engines.

INT. A LAB - DAY

Jim's assembled a motley crew of professors and cyberpunks whose attention is riveted on the small Russian command module that David places on the work table.

DAVID
Witness the ultimate piece of Cold
War insanity --

The module starts flashing and the Russian voice is heard.

JESSIE
(translating)
It's says there's one hour left before "Phase Three" terminates.

SAM
What's "Phase Three"?

The module starts screeching as if delivering an ominous reply --

DAVID
Judging by One and Two -- Three can't be good. We've got to trace where it's coming from, so we can locate the master control --

JESSIE
Rykov said it's hidden inside the U.S. Strategic Defense Systems.

JIM
That's a very bad spot.

MALVIN
Yeah, getting inside NORAD'S computers is like asking to visit Fort Knox with a metal detector.

David grabs the Russian satellite phone, flips open the case and turns it on.

DAVID
Don't worry. There's a freaked-out Russian woman who's convinced them by now.

INT. NORADPAC - AN OFFICE - DAY

Two MPs guard Marina Burova, who sits on a couch, pale, shaken, and handcuffed, her aggressive charm faded to a whimper.

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - AT THAT MOMENT

Traxler and the top brass listen to David Lightman's voice over the speaker phone --

DAVID (O.S.)
(over phone)
"Did Marina explain everything?"

TRAXLER
Yeah, just before she tried to OD on sleeping pills. Anyway, my gut reaction? This can't be true.

INTERCUT: TRAXLER AT NORADPAC / DAVID AT BERKELEY

David covers his ear against the noise of the generators. He watches the Berkeley crew hooking wires to the command module.

DAVID

Your gut reaction? You're willing to bet 200 million lives on your bureaucratic intestines? Traxler, NORAD's got to open their systems -- so we can find the goddamn control!

General Nevins speaks toward the speakerphone --

GENERAL NEVINS

This is General Nevins -- there's no concrete evidence linking this Cyber attack or the Russian planes to some kind of "Doomsday" --

An aide interrupts with new printouts.

AIDE

General, you better look at these. They're reports picked up from international shortwave --

The General reads the reports -- and changes his tune.

GENERAL NEVINS

God help us...

CUT TO:

EXT. A RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH - DAY

A tour bus rolls past St. Basil's Basilica, whose onion-shaped dome reflects a golden sunset.

ST. PETERSBURG - RUSSIA

INT. THE TOUR BUS

A Russian guide speaks into a microphone.

RUSSIAN GUIDE

Our church was closed by the communists. And this building you see now held prisoners tortured by the KGB. So everyday we thank God the Soviet Union is dead and we are at peace.

A woman from Iowa points out the window --

WOMAN

That don't look so peaceful to me!

The tourists stare in amazement -- as the nose-cones of three mammoth **Russian SS-19 "Stilleto" Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles** rip up through the pavement of a parking lot.

The old ICBMs knock aside cars like toys as they rise into position from their long-forgotten silos.

CUT TO:

EXT. JELGAVA MOUNTAINS - DAY

Railroad tracks spider-web around a smoky industrial city.

RIGA - LATVIA

Suddenly yard workers shout and flee -- as **two huge Russian locomotives** crash out of boarded-over, abandoned tunnels!

Flatcars rumble behind, loaded with **SS-17 ICBM missiles rising on their launchers**.

CUT TO:

EXT. SUGAR CANE FIELDS - DAY

Cuban music blares as workers with machetes chop rows of cane.

SANTA CLARA PROVINCE - CUBA

Suddenly the fields heave upward, dirt is spewed as if from a volcano. And the ominous tips of five **mammoth Russian SS-11 "Sego" missiles** rise from their decades old tombs.

CUT TO:

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - DAY

General Nevins turns quickly to look at **the huge wall screens** -- which are **suddenly coming back to life**. They show the world and flashing red lights appearing in several locations --

MAJOR FRANKLIN
The screens are up again.

GENERAL NEVINS
Christ, those are Russian missiles being readied.

CERT ADVISOR
Whatever's controlling the computers -- is playing with us -- deliberately showing the missiles aimed at us.

MAJOR FRANKLIN
We should be moving to Maximum
Vigilance status --

GENERAL NEVINS
How? We've lost control of the system.
Damn it, call the Berkeley hackers --
give them the codes. I'd try voodoo
if I thought it'd help.

A counter on a wall screen shows **50' 49" 10**. And the tenths of second are spinning downward.

LT. BECKMAN
We've only got fifty minutes.

Traxler moves to a radio phone and picks up the handset --

TRAXLER
Is Lightman there?
(after a beat)
You still want in? Then grab a pencil.
Here are the codes.
(reading from a list)
Couple Cluster 24, Molscat 18 --

INT. BERKELEY LABS - DAY

Listening on the phone, David relays the codes to Malvin, who's at a nearby computer.

DAVID
Molscat 18, I/O impulse 9, no clip,
serverflags B4-S, ETM level 13 --

Scientists and hackers dive in, shouting the codes to an adjacent lab where more volunteers search out the "Doomsday Machine's" master control.

JIM (O.S.)
Okay, I'm in! The codes are working.

Suddenly the hackers' screens light up with snow-storms of numbers as they enter the top-secret Strategic Defense System.

VARIOUS VOICES
We're in... I'm on line... Link up...

SAM
We're amped! Let's choke this cyber
crud.

David starts keying in codes -- until the module falls silent.

DAVID
Jessie? He's not talking to us.
What's going on over there?

Jessie's expression darkens -- the module lays dead on the table -- despite the life-support wires attached to it.

JESSIE
There's nothing -- no transmissions.

MALVIN
We can't run a trace unless the module's receiving.

There's a terrible moment of suspended animation as the hackers in both labs wait -- and wait --

SAM
(watching the module)
Come on little dude, tune in, turn on.
(thinking a moment)
Shit.

JESSIE
What?

Sam grabs the module, flips it over, and finds a tiny lever that springs open a small compartment --

SAM
The bunny died. The bunny died.

DAVID
The kid's lost it...

SAM
No, it's the battery!

Sam rips off his backpack and in fast-motion unloads a CD player, pager, cell phone, Game Boy, APS camera, GPS locator. He rips them open one by one until he finds a compatible power source.

As they watch, Sam jerry-rigs wires to the module, powers it up and the light starts flashing again.

SAM (CONT'D)
End of problemo.

The module starts shrieking again -- its shrill notes sending everybody back to work.

DAVID
Okay, where's it coming from? Locate the signal source.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANADYR, RUSSIA - DAY

A herd of bellowing bull moose stampeded as **three more Russian ICBM missiles** crash up through the frozen taiga.

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - AT THAT MOMENT

The three Russian missiles appear as new FLASHING RED CIRCLES on the wall screens. General Nevins watches the counter spinning down from **40 minutes 28 seconds**.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SECOND BERKELEY LAB - DAY

Sam moves down the rows of computers, watching the team searching the defense system computers. But the hackers and scientists are stymied as they try to source the signals.

INT. THE MAIN LAB

Sam runs in from the other lab.

DAVID
Anything? Anybody trace it?

SAM
No. Nothing but those whale songs.

JIM
We've combed through 90 percent of the military's computers --

DAVID
We're playing hide and seek with this lurker -- and we're losing the game.

David checks the small module -- its lights flash and tones still screech. David suddenly rips off a connector wire -- then another.

JESSIE
What're you doing?

DAVID
Our only chance is to make it our turn. It's time to make the damn master control -- look for us.

David rips the last wire off -- the module stops flashing -- the tones stop. All around the room, the computers go dead, their monitors fading to black.

SAM
Oh man, what'd you do? We crashed.

MALVIN
David, why'd you -- ?

DAVID
By taking the module out of the loop, the master control's gonna notice the disconnect -- and start wondering where its little module went...

They wait -- nothing happens. The computers remain dark. But David remains optimistic.

DAVID (CONT'D)
The master control's gonna sneak out of its hiding place and take a look.

They wait -- still nothing happens. David looks worried.

JESSIE
You have a plan B?

A quiet pall falls over the lab.

SAM
It wasn't a totally dim idea. I think I see what Dr Lightman was... trying to...

David hears a beeping and glances at his wrist watch. When the beeping sounds again, he checks his watch again -- then realizes -- it's not the watch -- it's something else.

Jessie sees David head down the row of dark computers. He stops, bends, moves on, listens -- until the beeping grows louder --

Finally, David leans over the last unmanned console -- and realizes the beeping is coming from this computer -- and on its screen **a single BLIP is flashing**.

DAVID
It's here! Sonofabitch!

David jumps into a chair. The others rush toward the computer and watch him keying in commands like a madman.

DAVID (CONT'D)
I hooked it.

JESSIE
You were right.

SAM
You did it. Mr Russian Control Freak sneaked out of his hole and came looking for his baby module.

DAVID
Now he's high-tailing it back, but I got a line on him. I'm ridin' him now.

JIM
Where is it? Where's he taking you?!

David keys in commands and a locator comes up on the screen. There's a pause -- and he looks at Jessie --

DAVID
Wait a minute -- I've been there before...

JESSIE
Where?

DAVID
The Point Fremont Naval Station.

CUT TO:

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - DAY

Holding the radio phone, Traxler reports to General Nevins.

TRAXLER
Berkeley's located the master control.

Major Franklin reads another short-wave message --

GENERAL NEVINS
Our last line of defense -- a bunch of hackers.

Major Franklin watches the wall screens: time left **35 minutes**. More flashing red lights indicate reactivated missile sites --

MAJOR FRANKLIN
Jesus -- Rykov built hidden sites all over the globe.

EXT. CHONGJIN, NORTH KOREA - AT THAT MOMENT

Missiles in a forest start throwing off clouds of gas as their Proton booster engines come to life

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO BAY - DAY

Another storm front surges as a helicopter swoops over the bay.

INT. THE HELICOPTER

Traxler looks down at Point Fremont Naval Station, nestled on the coast above the wind-tossed Pacific. He spots a Wagoneer and an old Ford van racing along the highway below.

INT. THE WAGONEER - DAY

Rain splatters the windshield as David drives. The module sits on the seat next to Jessie, still shrieking its mysterious tones.

EXT. THE HIGHWAY - DAY

Following the Wagoneer, Jim's pockmarked Ford van smokes through the main gate of the "POINT FREMONT NAVAL STATION".

EXT. POINT FREMONT NAVAL STATION - DAY

The Wagoneer skids to a stop. David, Jessie and Sam bail out as Traxler's helicopter touches down in the rain. They're met by the base COMMANDER and his staff.

DAVID
We've only got ten minutes!

NAVY COMMANDER
(shouting)
We've combed our systems -- no sign of any electronic infiltration!

DAVID
That's not where it is!

TRAXLER
Then where is it?!

DAVID
Remember the RED STAR...?

INT. THE WET DOCK

Huge doors open, light flares in and the storm pounds outside. The group is awed by the sight of the Russian K-194 Echo-II class nuclear submarine ***Red Star*** floating in the dark water.

NAVY COMMANDER
But the sub's just been sitting here -- we captured it years ago.

DAVID
You didn't capture it.

NAVY COMMANDER
What're you talking about?

DAVID
The sub was a gift. A Trojan Horse.
The Russians knew if they scuttled
the sub and made it look disabled --

JESSIE
The U.S. Navy would grab it, tow it
into San Francisco Bay --

DAVID
And bring the Doomsday Protocol --
right into the heart of America.

They run to the sub and climb ladders to board it.

INT. THE SUBMARINE "RED STAR"

Pale work lights illuminate the group descending into the old sub. Wires dangle in the dark passageways through which David and the others follow the commander.

The Red Star's been stripped, equipment bays ripped out and the inside of its hull exposed. Passing through it is like walking through the skeleton of an old beached whale.

NAVY COMMANDER
We learned a hell of lot about Russian
weapons systems from this sub.

DAVID
Only what the Soviets wanted you to
learn. And not a clue about the
biggest threat it carried.

INT. OPERATION CONTROL ROOM

They stop in the sub's control room.

MALVIN
So where could this master control
be? Christ, where do we start?

An older Chief Petty Officer shakes his head.

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER
It can't be here. I was part of the
crew that stripped and studied every
inch of this sub.

DAVID
Did you hook your computers to the
sub's computers?

NAVY COMMANDER
Yes, we analyzed every piece of data --

DAVID
No, what you did was you let it in.
And it sent the mother of all viruses
back upstream into your computers,
then into all the Navy computers,
then into the entire U.S. Defense
system. And that monster virus was
spawned right here.

NAVY COMMANDER
You write science or science fiction?
I'm telling you there is nothing left
here -- no master control could have --

Suddenly the small module comes to life -- as if winning the argument for David. David lays it on a chart table. The digitized Russian voice speaks, and Jessie translates.

JESSIE
Five minutes left.

EXT. ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA - AT THAT MOMENT

The hydrogen-fueled main engine thunders in a deafening roar as the ICBMs prepare to launch.

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - DAY

General Nevins watches the screens. Major Franklin's on the radio phone --

MAJOR FRANKLIN
Traxler -- what's going on?

INT. SUBMARINE CONTROL ROOM

The strange tones are shrieking from the module. David and the hackers quickly search the empty bays and carcasses of equipment.

TRAXLER
(on phone)
They're working on it, Major.
Everything's just fine.
(then to the Petty Officer)
I think we're dead meat. What about
emergency shelters?

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER
We've got an underground headquarters.

They listen to the shrill signal of doom coming over the module. Suddenly, Jessie grabs the module and tosses it. The module smashes against a bulkhead.

JESSIE
(losing it)
This wasn't supposed to happen! We thought we knew all the answers. So did the Russians! Now none of us can stop the world from --
(looking at David)
You were right. We twisted technology, and the machines took over!

The others are surprised by Jessie's outburst. David walks over and kneels to pick up the broken module.

JESSIE (CONT'D)
Everything David said was true -- we became slaves of the machines that in seconds are going to destroy us!

David stands and holds the broken module to his ear. The shrill signal grows fainter and slows as the module dies -- and as they slow the signals sound different -- they sound like --

DAVID
Music.

JESSIE
(still ranting)
We let science be corrupted and we became the tools of our tools just like --
(stopping in mid-speech)
What?

DAVID
The signals slowed down -- sound like -- music.

David looks around, spots some cobweb covered p.a. speakers.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Music!

He runs over, finds some broken conduit, a maze of wires, and finally a dangling control box.

He twists the dial on the control box and the P.A. speakers come alive -- transmitting the screeching sound at a deafening level throughout the submarine.

SAM
Those are the same signals!

DAVID
(to the commander)
What are these speakers hooked up to!

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER
Communications. The commo bay.

The petty officer takes off and David follows him.

EXT. SANTA CLARA PROVINCE, CUBA - AT THAT MOMENT

Smoke billows, engines screams the launch towers fall back and away from the Russian missiles.

INT. THE COMMO BAY - DAY

David and the hackers rush in and find stripped racks and piles of Russian electronics -- which they start rummaging through.

DAVID
The ships P.A. system's getting the same signals -- so there's got to be a transmitter or --

Traxler looks at his watch --

TRAXLER
We're down to a minute and a half!

David looks around in despair -- until he spots something in a dark corner. A single light flashing. David rushes over and drags out an intact piece of electronics equipment.

DAVID
Goddamn -- it's the sound system!

David punches buttons on the sound console and the screeching tones start to slow -- Traxler is on the phone to NORADPAC --

TRAXLER
(on the phone)
General! We found something.

David works the controls on the music system and the shrieking tones slow and become -- **MUSIC**.

As the seconds tick down toward the end of the world, they hear Bruce Springsteen's ***"Born in The USA"*** echoing through the old darkened sub.

DAVID
It was in the Russian music system -- the Doomsday Protocol's command tones were hidden in the music!

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER
I remember we were amazed when we found reels of American rock 'n roll --

JESSIE
So you didn't disable it?

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER
No, it was the one thing we didn't tear apart. Hell, we used to play the music as we stripped the sub.

DAVID
Rykov -- Rykov knew Americans would go for the music. And the commands to the space station, the satellites, the bombers and the missiles -- the command signals were hidden in the music and only appear at high speed.

SAM
Those assholes -- using our own rock 'n roll to nuke us.

TRAXLER
Forty-five seconds. Just destroy the goddamn thing!

Traxler pulls out his .38 and aims at the sound system.

DAVID
No, don't! It's already sent the commands. You can't stop it that way!

As ***"No Where To Run"*** plays eerily, David looks at Jessie.

DAVID (CONT'D)
Our only chance is -- grab the keyboard.

Jessie pulls out a keyboard from the console --

DAVID (CONT'D)
Type in the following commands --

JESSIE
You think we can just tell it to stop?

DAVID
No. We've got to tell it to go ahead with the final phase of the protocol.

The others are shocked. Is David insane? Jessie hesitates --

DAVID (CONT'D)
Go on, type. "Ignore your countdown -- finish the Protocol immediately -- annihilate North America now."

INT. NORADPAC COMMAND CONTROL ROOM - AT THAT MOMENT

General Nevins is listening to the conversation --

GENERAL NEVINS
Jesus Christ, what's he doing?

EXT. CHONGJIN, NORTH KOREA - DAY

Flames billow from the ICBM engines as the rocket propellant ignites.

INT. SUBMARINE CONTROL ROOM

Jessie types in the commands, speaking them aloud in Russian. Traxler checks his watch --

TRAXLER
Thirty seconds...

They all stare at the console. But nothing happens. ***"Save The Last Dance For Me"*** echoes over the sub's speakers...

JESSIE
David -- what're you -- ?

DAVID
It's okay -- it's thinking -- THINK DAMN IT!

Suddenly there is another noise -- the digitized voice returns and speaks in Russian.

JESSIE
(translating)
"I need -- last instructions -- repeated".

DAVID
Type it again. "Ignore your countdown, finish the Protocol immediately, annihilate North America now."

Jessie keys in the command. There is another pause. Then the machine says one suspicious word in Russian -- "***Pochemu***".

JESSIE
(translating)
"Why?"

And David smiles faintly.

DAVID
Type -- "just do it".

Jessie types that in, and the Russian voice responds --

JESSIE
(translating)
"Just do it -- is not a good enough reason."

DAVID
Yes. It sounds just like crazy General
Rykov when he was talking to Marina.
(to Jessie)
Tell it that everything is ready --
launch the missiles.

Jessie types the message and the Russian voice responds again --

JESSIE
(translating)
"Why this command? Could you have
some ulterior motive?"
(translating)
"What do you know that I don't?"
(translating)
"Perhaps you just want me to expose
my last weapons."

TRAXLER
Five seconds. Four --

JESSIE
(translating the voice)
"This could be a trick."

DAVID
Launch the missiles now!

TRAXLER
Two -- one --

The Russian voice says.... "Nyet".

JESSIE
"No."

DAVID
That I understood.

The machine speaks in Russian again --

JESSIE
(translating)
It's sending new commands: "Do not
launch missiles -- Final Phase -- is
on hold." It stopped the missiles!

EXT. RIGA, LATVIA - DAY

The Proton boosters die suddenly, and the flames from the rocket propellant dissipate. Railroad workers emerge from behind shelters and watch as **the giant missiles stand down**.

INT. "RED STAR" - SUBMARINE CONTROL ROOM - DAY

David smiles as the hackers whoop and cheer. Dam does an NFL victory shuffle. Jessie looks like she hasn't breathed in several minutes --

JESSIE
I don't get it -- what -- ?

SAM
It was Frankenstein's monster, right Dr. Lightman?

DAVID
Right. A monster built by General Rykov -- that suffered from the same Cold War disease that drove its creator crazy --

JESSIE
Paranoia.

DAVID
That's what made it tick.

The Russian voice keeps talking --

JESSIE
It just keeps asking suspicious questions.

DAVID
You want to put this "Doomsday Machine" out of its paranoid misery?

As David, Jessie and the others exit the commo room, they hear Tears for Fears' ***"Everybody Wants to Rule the World"*** echoing over the sub's speakers.

The commander nods and three Marines lift their automatic weapons to execute the "Doomsday Machine". The Russian voice is silenced by the bullets shredding the sound system.

EXT. THE WET DOCK AND PIERS - SUNSET

David and Jessie come out of the wet dock and look at the golden sun piercing through the black clouds over the Pacific.

JESSIE
What're you thinking?

DAVID
How much I really hated eighties music.
(as she frowns at him)
And how much I'm looking forward to waking up tomorrow morning -- with you.

JESSIE
How do you know I'd even -- I'm even -- tired?

He puts his arm around her and they walk off down the pier.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOLTUNOV CLINIC - MOSCOW - MORNING

In front of the abandoned hospital, Russian SIS agents load President Burova's supporters, now in handcuffs, into a police van. The Chief of Security looks around --

Through the deserted main hall of the building, he sees the silhouette of General Anton Rykov standing by the back door.

EXT. REAR OF CLINIC

General Rykov, still in uniform, stands alone looking out at the overgrown grounds slowly being retaken by the wild woods.

Birds are singing. And Rykov sees a squirrel bound across the grass and stop to pick up an acorn. The general watches the little animal as it starts to eat --

Suddenly a shrill scream pierces the air and a huge gyrfalcon swoops down, snaps up the squirrel in its lethal talons and flaps off with it.

The SIS Chief appears and notices Rykov smiling.

GENERAL RYKOV
The Americans -- they think they are safe now.

Rykov watches the raptor rise into the sky with its prey.

GENERAL RYKOV (CONT'D)
They do not know what is waiting for them up there -- on MIR. They laugh and call the MIR space station an old piece of Soviet junk. But they will learn otherwise. Very soon.

General Rykov heads back into the hospital, and the Security Chief wonders what this crazy old man is talking about.

THE END